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Columbia University
STUDIES IN ROMANCE PHILOLOGY AND LITERATURE

THE SYMBOLISM OF VOLTAIRE'S NOVELS

THE SYMBOLISM OF VOLTAIRE'S NOVELS

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ZADIG

BY

WILLIAM RALEIGH PRICE, PH.D.

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The Symbolism of Voltaire's Novels
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Introduction is to show, (1) where a real lacuna exists in the study of Voltaire's novels, and (2) how that lacuna is to be filled.

In order to show this, I shall give a résumé and an analysis of what has been done by my predecessors in the field.

Résumé of the Bibliography

No less a scholar than Gaston Paris has treated the episode of the Angel and the Hermit (*La Poésie du moyen âge, première série, troisième édition,* Paris, 1895, p. 151 ff.) as it has appeared in literature from the earliest times down. If he had connected this episode with

Voltaire's life and informed us just what Voltaire meant by it, there would be nothing more to be said on this topic; but, unfortunately, he neglected to do that.

There is a dissertation on the *Sources of Zadig,* by Mr. W. Seele (Leipzig, 1891), which is largely an elaboration of hints thrown out by Dunlop and others. The author confines himself strictly to his subject of the *sources,* giving nothing about Voltaire's purpose in writing the novel.

In treating the general topic of the Orient in French, German and English literatures, the following authors have something to say about *Zadig:* (1) Pierre Martino (*L'Orient dans la littérature française au XVII^e^ et au XVIII^e^ siècle,* Paris, 1906); (2) A. J. F. Remy (*The Influence of India and Persia on the poetry of Germany,* New York, 1901); (3) Martha P. Conant (*The Oriental Tale in England in the Eighteenth Century,* New York, 1908).

M. Pierre Martino gives the impression that he is not at all sure just what *Zadig* purports to be; he dismisses the subject of its realism by saying that it is a capricious tale in the style of Crébillon *fils,* in which allusions to modern life crop

up unexpectedly and by way of contrast (p. 277 f.). Dr. Remy points out the immediate and the ultimate sources of the novel (p. 15), and calls attention to the meaning of the name of the hero as "Speaker of the truth" (following, in this interpretation, Hammer, *Geschichte der schönen Redekünste Persiens*). But neither Remy nor Hammer attempted to show whether Voltaire was familiar with this meaning, either by citing his possible authorities, or by internal evidence from the novel. Miss Conant says (p. 135) that Zadig is, "of course," Voltaire, but she offers no evidence to substantiate her assertion. She probably followed Parton's *Life of Voltaire,* in which the Duchess of Maine is quoted as authority for that application. Miss Conant also indicates her belief that the other characters, "with their fanciful Oriental names," are Voltaire's court friends and enemies.

Desnoiresterres has little to say about Voltaire's novels. He gives a paragraph of three lines to *Candide,* and calls attention, in a note, to the perfidious intention, the sly allusions, of *Zadig.* In his well-known *Life of Voltaire,* S. G. Tallentyre says that *Candide* is directed

against Jean Jacques Rousseau, but fails to specify in what way and to what extent. The general histories of the novel are just as meagre, with the exception of Dunlop, for the sources of *Zadig*. Dunlop contrasts the successful investigation of the sources of *Zadig* with the failure to discover any literary sources for *Candide*.

There are a few magazine articles about Voltaire's novels, of which the following may be mentioned: (1) *Blackwood's Magazine,* IV (1819), p. 155 ff.; (2) *Dublin University Magazine,* LXVII (1866), p. 64 ff., p. 184 ff.; (3) *Modern Language Notes,* 1906 (in which Mr. Leon Fraser points out the earliest source of the episode of the Dog and the Horse, in the *Talmud*).

Louis Moland (whose edition of Voltaire's works will be referred to as M., followed by the volume and the page number), gives excerpts of the more important utterances about Voltaire's novels (in Vols. I and XXI, the latter of which contains the novels). They deal principally with the moral of the novels (*i. e.,* the philosophic thesis, what the Germans call the *Tendenz*), or they are expressions of personal impressions. Moland's edition also reproduces

the footnotes of his predecessors, and offers some original ones. They give important indications of the purpose of Voltaire in writing his novels, but no general conclusions are drawn from them.

Analysis of the Bibliography

The above résumé of the Bibliography shows that the three points of view in literary criticism: the historical, the psychological, and the impressionistic, are all represented, but in very unequal proportions and by critics of widely different significance. I shall treat them successively under their proper headings.

The Historical Criticisms

The historical criticisms deal, it will be noticed, exclusively with the literary sources. The problem that confronts us here is to determine the significance of such investigations for the interpretation of Voltaire's novels.

No attempt is made by me to belittle the importance of the investigation of sources *per se;* the point is, whether such investigations are important for Voltaire's work. I shall attempt to show that they have little or no importance.

In the first place, what have we accomplished

when we have shown that every episode in *Zadig* is imitated from this or that literary source? We have, at the most, confirmed Fréron's charge (M. 21, p. 86, note 1), that Voltaire was a common plagiarist, lacking in invention and devoid of imagination. That would be a remarkable conclusion about the work of a man like Voltaire, whose imagination received such unstinted praise from his contemporaries, and which, even to us, sparkles and effervesces through the printed words.

In the second place, if *Zadig* is a literary patch-work, how are we to explain *Candide,* for which no literary sources have been discovered? Is it likely that Voltaire's imagination, verve, originality, invention were less in 1747 than in 1759? On the contrary, the conclusion is absurd.

I consider it demonstrated that, the greater and the better founded the charges of imitation in *Zadig* seem, the less the significance of such charges is for the interpretation of Voltaire's work.

Now, if the significance of Voltaire's novels is not in the sources, wherein does it consist? I shall show that it consists in his symbolism.

In the first place, what has Voltaire to do with Oriental fiction? or with fiction? or with the Orient? Is it not clear that the Orient is, for him, but a symbol for the Occident, just as he speaks of the bonzes and the Magians as symbols of the priests of France? We must never lose sight of the intensely practical character of Voltaire's work; its very intimate connection with his own life and the life of his times. He was not the type of author who shut himself up in his study and thought out or sought out fine themes and situations for artistic *remanîment*. Even his dramas have an intimate connection with the thought, life, and social conditions in which he lived. He was probably inspired to compose *Œdipe* by the relations of the Regent and his daughter, the famous Duchess of Berry. He tells us that the persecutions which he suffered during the period of the *Voltairomanie* turned to tragic sentiments and inspired the composition of *Zulime* and *Mahomet* (M. 35, pp. 226–227). If that is true of his dramas, how much more must it be true of his novels! There is an edition of *Zadig* of the year 1756 (cf. Bengesco, I, p. 438, note) entitled: *La destinée ou le théâtre de la*

vie humaine, ouvrage historique de M. de Voltaire. The publisher of that edition took liberties with Voltaire's title, but the character of Voltaire's work justifies them. Destiny is but the linking of cause and effect in a given environment. If, in *Zadig,* the Orient is a symbol for the Occident, the characters, the scenes, the incidents and episodes of the novel are also symbolic, and the literary sources can have nothing to do with the interpretation of the work. Voltaire seems to wish to indicate that the significance of *Zadig* lies in its symbolism, when he says, in the *Épitre dédicatoire* (M. 21, p. 32), that *l'histoire de Zadig* (*est un*) *ouvrage qui dit plus qu'il ne semble dire.*

The conclusion which we have reached by an analysis of the historical criticisms is fortified by Voltaire's opinions about the novel in general, and about particular novels. It is obvious that one of the best indications as to what Voltaire's novels are likely to be, as well as what they are likely not to be, is furnished by his criticisms of other novels. The following are the more important of these criticisms.

Voltaire's Criticisms of the Novel

He praises *Gulliver* (M. 33, p. 165; Febr. 1727), which had appeared the preceding year. "C'est le Rabelais de l'Angleterre; mais c'est un Rabelais sans fatras, et ce livre serait amusant par lui-même, par les imaginations singulières dont il est plein, par la légèreté de son style, . . . quand il ne serait pas d'ailleurs la satire du genre humain."

He does not understand the *Esprit des Lois,* but he praises the *Lettres persanes:* "bon ouvrage que celui-là" (M. 1, p. 349). "Ces ouvrages d'ordinaire ne réussissent qu'à la faveur de l'air étranger; on met avec succès dans la bouche d'un Asiatique la satire de notre pays, qui serait bien moins accueillie dans la bouche d'un compatriote; ce qui est commun par soi-même devient alors singulier" (M. 14, *Catalogue des grands écrivains, article Montesquieu*).

He praises the satire of contemporary events and personages by Crébillon *fils* (*Tanzaï et Néardané, ou l' Écumoire, histoire japonaise*). "L'Histoire japonaise m'a fort réjoui dans ma solitude; je ne sais rien de si fou que ce livre, et rien de si sot que d'avoir mis l'auteur à la Bastille. Dans quel siècle vivons-nous donc? On

brûlerait apparemment La Fontaine aujourd'hui" (M. 33, p. 461, note; p. 472). They would have burned him (Voltaire), if he had been the author, is the sentiment of his friends.

There are scores of references for his scorn of the usual type of novel, with its imaginary events and personages. They are lacking in imagination, full of portraits of people whom the author does not know (M. 21, p. 48), and spoil the taste of young people (M. 14, p. 142). There is more in four pages of Ariosto than in all these insipid writings which inundate France. He is never tired of praising Ariosto's admirable allegories, which make his poems immortal.

The following letter to Marmontel, whose *Contes moraux* were so popular in the latter half of the 18th century, is a perfectly clear and definite indication of Voltaire's conception of the mission which fiction should fulfill (January 28, 1764); "Vous devriez bien nous faire des contes philosophiques, où vous rendriez ridicules certains sots et certaines sottises, certaines méchancetés et certains méchants; le tout avec discrétion, en prenant bien votre

temps, et en rognant les griffes de la bête quand vous la trouverez un peu endormie." What better plan, and what plan more in harmony with all that we know of Voltaire, could be chosen by the author of *Zadig* and *Candide*, than the one indicated here: to draw his characters and scenes from reality, subordinated to an anti-religious tendency? It is significant for his realism that he wrote to the Marquis de Thibouville, author of love stories of Egypt and Syria, that Mme. Denis was more interested in what was taking place in Germany during the Seven Years' War, than in what was going on at Memphis and Babylon (M. 39, p. 301). Frederick also shows that he was fully cognizant of the realistic bearing of Voltaire's works when he urges him to write an *Akakia* to flay the fools of Europe and their follies (M. 39, p. 434). There is no doubt that Voltaire was following his advice when he composed *Candide*. Frederick also gives testimony to the presence of moral allegories in *Zadig* and *Candide* (M. 1, p. 139; *Éloge de Voltaire par le roi de Prusse*).

Enough has been quoted to show, in connection with the historical criticisms which we

have analysed, that the significance of Voltaire's novels must consist in their relation to his life and the life of his times. This is really a problem in psychological criticism.

The Psychological Criticisms

The analysis of the Bibliography shows but few and scattered traces of psychological criticism. Where it appears is principally in connection with the moral of the novels. This is all well and good in the case of some of the novels, as *Micromegas,* for example; here the moral is everything. Take away the philosophic idea of the relativity of things and there would be nothing left. Likewise in *L'Ingénu,* with its dearth of characters and incident, and its wealth of discussion and quotations, the tendency of the novel is of paramount importance. But this is far from being the case in *Zadig* and *Candide,* with their great variety of characters and episodes. Here the moral does not play so great a rôle, nor is it so easy to determine just what that moral is. For example, how much further are we advanced, if, like Moland, we subscribe to Auger's explanation of the moral of *Zadig* and *Candide?* (M. 21, p. IV of

the *Avertissement*): "Zadig a pour objet de démontrer que la Providence nous conduit par des voies dont le secret lui appartient et dont souvent s'indigne notre raison bornée et peu soumise. Candide, tableau épouvantablement gai des misères de la vie humaine, est une réfutation du système de l'optimisme, déjà combattu par l'auteur dans son poème du Désastre de Lisbonne." We need to define our terms here, or Auger's words are either meaningless or misleading. We must know what Voltaire means by Providence in *Zadig* and by Optimism in *Candide*. Is it not rather strange that the author of the *Essai sur les mœurs* and of the *Dictionnaire philosophique,* through both of which the phrase, *adorons la Providence et soumettons-nous,* runs like a mocking refrain, should mean it seriously and literally, in the Christian sense, in *Zadig?* And is it not just as strange that Voltaire, who never changed his mind about *Pope's Essay on Man,* which he calls the finest didactic poem ever written, and who himself was a *cause-finalier,* should refute the system of Optimism, as a philosophic conception, in *Candide?*

What is the secret of these and similar con-

tradictions in Voltaire? Why, for example, does the man of whom Marmontel truly said (*Mémoires,* Vol. 2; quoted from M. 1, p. 38; *Jugements sur Voltaire*): "Mais le plus grand des biens, le repos, lui fut inconnu," appear in the rôle of the Sybarite in the *Mondain?* Such contradictions are only apparent contradictions. Either the author takes only one phase of a given conception, or philosophic system, and uses it as a convenient thread on which he strings a number of episodes, or, on the other hand, it is not a bit different with his work than with his descriptions of the court, for example. At one time the court is the *palais d'Alcine;* at another it is the *palais du vice.* It all depends upon the author's personal experiences within a given period and the purpose he has in view in the composition of his works. Any judgment of his literary productions apart from the experiences in which they are rooted is bound to be false and misleading. Thus Faguet charges him, from the title of one of his *Épitres,* with continually arguing the *Pour* and the *Contre.* There is a basis of truth in Faguet's charge; Voltaire does argue for and against, but he has good and sufficient reason for so

doing. The presentation of arguments for and against in the same work is a frequent device with him to keep the postern open when the main entrance is garnished by the emissaries of persecution; his enemies have mistaken the interlocutors; his own ideas are those of A, not those of B. Voltaire alternately praises and lashes his century, but the progress of reason on the one hand, or the success of certain fools and their follies on the other hand, are sufficient explanation of his conduct.

There have been two fallacies in the psychological criticisms of Voltaire's novels. They both have to do with the moral, or tendency of the novels, and consist in its interpretation without due consideration, first, of the various meanings that may be attached to such words as Providence, Destiny, Optimism, and second, of the author's experiences in the period in which his work was conceived and composed. Thus the psychological point of view, as it has been applied to Voltaire's novels, has produced little more than impressionism.

The Impressionistic Criticisms

It is axiomatic that the personal opinions of a critic have no more authority than we are willing, or than we are obliged by various considerations, to concede to them; yet they are often of value, in that they indicate a lacuna for historical and psychological criticism to fill. The very fact that the impressionist expresses an opinion without having maturely investigated the subject and without a show of evidence to support his conclusion, leaves the field open for confirmation or refutal. This is true, in a remarkable degree, of the criticisms of Voltaire's novels.

The Lacuna

The Duchess of Maine asserted, according to Parton, that Zadig was Voltaire, and that Moabdar was Louis XV. Such an expression of opinion can not be disposed of offhand. Many of Voltaire's novels were composed at Sceaux, and the Duchess was in a position to know intimately the character of these novels, and especially that of *Zadig*. A large problem is here suggested: the identification of the characters of the novel with their actual or probable

prototypes. That most of the personages of the novel are Voltaire's friends and enemies "under fanciful Oriental names," as suggested by Miss Conant, seems probable, first, in view of the statement of the Duchess of Maine, second, because one character, Yébor, has long been identified with Boyer, and third, because, in all Voltaire's novels, there are an infinity of allusions to contemporary events and personages. The probabilities, then, are all in favor of the hypothesis that Cador, for example, is a particular friend of Voltaire, and that Arimaze is a particular *Envieux*.

What Desnoiresterres calls *l'intention perfide, l'allusion sournoise* suggests an equally important lacuna, intimately connected with the preceding. What was this intention? What are these allusions?

The opinion of the King of Prussia that *Zadig* and *Candide* contain moral allegories suggests a third problem of no less importance: the discovery and interpretation of these allegories.

The opinion of Hammer and Remy that the name Zadig is from the Arabic and means "Speaker of the truth" suggests a fourth prob-

lem of equal significance: the interpretation of the proper names of the novels. That a real problem confronts us here is obvious, first, because, if Zadig meant the "Truth-teller" for Voltaire, that meaning must have influenced the conception and execution of his novel; second, because one anagramme (Yébor for Boyer) has been discovered in the novel; third, because we meet with such curious names in Voltaire's novels: Orcan, Ogul, Arbogad, Cacambo, Thunder-ten-tronckh, among others, and it is hardly conceivable that they mean nothing.

One of the most prominent traits of the literatures that Voltaire is imitating in *Zadig* is the ready bestowal of epithets to commemorate certain events. Numerous instances of this will occur to any reader of the Bible. An Arab had as many epithets as he had characteristics. Besides, Voltaire's chief argument that the wretched Hebrews borrowed their cult from the Egyptians, the Phœnicians, and the Babylonians, was drawn from a study of their proper names. They got their Adonaï from the Phœnicians, their angels and devils from the Chaldeans, their Enoch was the same as Janus, their Eloa was the same root as Helios, etc. Voltaire

simply imitated the scholarship of his time, wherever it suited his purpose. If it did not suit his purpose, he discarded it with scorn and irony. He then refers to it as the "demon of etymologizing." Bochart and Calmet continually explained French words as derived from the Hebrew. Bochart considered that Chinese and German were the same language (M. 17, p. 516). He made the Celts a colony of the Egyptians (M. 18, p. 107). Voltaire charges the authors of the *Dictionnaire de Trévoux* with carrying this practice of etymologizing according to sound to an absurd excess (M. 17, p. 126). *Dôme,* they say, is from Samaritan *Doma,* which means "better"; Phison is the same as the Guadalquivir, because, "de Phison on fait aisément Phaetis; de Phaetis on fait Baetis, qui est précisément le Guadalquivir" (M. 17, p. 275).

In view of Voltaire's known practice and that of his contemporaries, it would seem important to determine the provenience of the names of his characters. Take the name of the angel Jesrad, for example. Can there be any adequate interpretation of the episode in which he appears, without an investigation of the name

of this enigmatical creature, who is man and angel, who speaks so wisely and acts so diabolically, and who finally flies back to the tenth sphere, which mythology has always assigned as the abode of the supreme being? Or, consider Arbogad, the robber. In Hebrew, *gad* means both "robber" and "God." How can a robber be God? Or how can God be a robber? And what has *arbo* to do with the name?

The names of the characters, the identification of the characters, the interpretation of the purpose of the author, of his allusions, of his allegories, are all phases of one and the same question, namely, Voltaire's symbolism. That is the lacuna.

How this Lacuna is to be Filled

The question that must be answered now, is: How is this lacuna to be filled? I shall try to fill it by a careful study of Voltaire's method of composition.

I do not refer here to Voltaire's style; I am not concerned with the vivacity of his language, the rapidity of his action, the lightness of his touch, the precision of his comparisons. What I wish to ascertain is, how he came to create

certain characters; what they actually are, why they are just what they are, *i. e.*, what the author meant them to be, and why. The problem is one of psychological analysis; the method is a painstaking search for data; the data are furnished by Voltaire's works in fifty large octavo volumes.

CHAPTER II

VOLTAIRE'S SYMBOLISM

In this chapter I shall examine, (1) what Voltaire's symbolism is; (2) what its sources are; (3) why he made use of it; and (4) his method of composition.

What Voltaire's Symbolism Is

I am not particularly concerned with symbolism, as such, but rather with a certain type of narrative, description, and characterization which I think that I have discovered in Voltaire and which, for want of a better name, I have termed Voltaire's symbolism. I mean by it simply his use of symbols.

What is a symbol? I use it in the sense of anything which stands for another thing, or for other things. In order to stand for another thing, or for other things, a word, or term, or sign must be, by established convention or by individual use, a part of the idea or ideas for which it is used as the representative; as, for

example, the cross, for Christianity. A symbol may be, therefore, by its significance and conventional use, or may be made, by an artificial association, the representative of a score of things, by virtue of certain similar or identical characteristics. In this respect symbolism differs from the parable, which, by its etymology, is quite the same word. In a parable there are generally but two terms to the comparison, as: "The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a certain man," etc. The parable of the ewe lamb is in point, because it shows the second step in symbolism. When the High Priest says to David: "Thou art the man," he has changed his simile into a metaphor, into a simple equation. Symbolism is, therefore, the use, or the abuse, if you will, of a metaphor, and may itself be illustrated symbolically, as follows: If A is like B, and B is like C, and C is like D, then, by virtue of the element common to them all, A = B = C = D. That is Voltaire's symbolism reduced to its lowest terms.

The Sources of Voltaire's Symbolism

The sources of Voltaire's symbolism are to be found ultimately in the names he gives to

things. Now, the names that one gives to things depend on the way one looks at things. It is obvious that the cross can not mean for Voltaire what it meant for the Jansenists or the Jesuits, and that he can not look upon David with the eyes of the devout believer, as a man after God's own heart. What was the cross for him? It was in the same category as the sacred cat among the Egyptians. How does he tell the tragic story of the infamous martyrdom of the Chevalier de La Barre? A young man, who failed to salute the sacred cat borne by the hierophant in solemn procession, was killed *à coups de barre de fer.* What was King David for him? An infamous brigand who collected a band of four hundred debauchees and usurped the crown of a little kingdom of barbarians, whose little tribal God was a man after the King's own heart (M. 27, p. 232).

At best words are but symbols; their meaning and application are varying, subtile, elusive. But how much so when an author plays with them! It is obvious that an author can make use of words in their etymological significance, in their meaning by extension, and with any connotations that they may have for him. How

can Voltaire make Jean Jacques Rousseau "un sauvage"? First, because Rousseau loved to wander alone in the woods, and "sauvage" means, etymologically, "he who lives in the woods"; second, because he made himself the prophet of man in a state of nature. What is paradise for Voltaire? "Vivre éternellement dans les cieux avec l'Être suprême, ou aller se promener dans le jardin, dans le paradis, fut la même chose pour les hommes, qui parlent toujours sans s'entendre, et qui n'ont pu guère avoir encore d'idées nettes ni d'expressions justes" (M. 21, p. 392). These are simple illustrations, but it is obvious from them that we can know nothing of an author's symbolism without knowing what meanings he gives to words, how he associates them, how he makes them equivalent, and by what name, sign, or symbol in short, he calls this equivalence. An author can make his symbolism as unintelligible to us as a work in a foreign tongue, with whose vocabulary and syntax we are unfamiliar. But then he would be defeating his own purpose, which is, of course, to be read and to influence his readers. Therefore the author of a symbolic work generally indicates enough of

his symbolism to half conceal, half reveal his meaning and his purpose. It sets one thinking, whets the curiosity, and finds everywhere appreciation, because each reader takes of it what appeals to him most. But this impressionistic, purely subjective interpretation is not the method of the serious literary student; he must determine the plan of the whole work, as well as the reciprocal relation of all its parts.

Why Voltaire made Use of Symbolism

Why should Voltaire make use of symbolism, he, the great apostle of enlightenment? The reasons are both subjective and objective.

The subjective reason is that he was an 18th century poet. The artificiality of this poetry is one of its most marked characteristics. No better indication of this can be found than Voltaire's characterization of poetic imagery, in his letter to Frederick (M. 34, p. 359): "Une idée poétique c'est, comme le sait Votre Altesse royale, une image brillante substituée à l'idée naturelle de la chose dont on veut parler; par exemple, je dirai en prose: il y a dans le monde un jeune prince vertueux et plein de talents, qui

déteste l'envie et le fanatisme. Je dirai en vers:

> "O Minerve! ô divine Astrée!
> Par vous sa jeunesse inspirée
> Suivit les arts et les vertus;
> L'Envie au cœur faux, à l'œil louche,
> Et le fanatisme farouche,
> Sous ses pieds tombent abattus."

One seems to hear the *maître de philosophie* of the *Bourgeois gentilhomme* explaining to M. Jourdain the difference between prose and poetry. The idea that nothing which was natural could be poetic seems strange to us, but it was not strange to Voltaire and his contemporaries. Everywhere we find this love of figures, of allegory, of brilliant imagery. It reminds one of the preciosity of the hôtel de Rambouillet; and, by his education and training, although not by his active participation in the life of his century, Voltaire belongs to the *Siècle de Louis XIV*, which he so extolled. He tells us that one of the school exercises in his youth was the symbolic interpretation of pictures, such as that of an old man and a young girl (*Essai sur les mœurs*, Beuchot 15, p. 219): "L'un disait, c'est l'hiver et le printemps; l'autre, c'est la neige et le feu;

un autre, c'est la rose et l'épine, ou bien, c'est la force et la faiblesse: et celui qui avait trouvé le sens le plus éloigné du sujet, l'application la plus extraordinaire, gagnait le prix."

As early as 1722 (M. 33, p. 60), we find him writing to Jean Baptiste Rousseau, himself a notable writer of allegories in the style of Boileau, to explain the allegories in the *Henriade:* "Les fictions y sont toutes allégoriques; nos passions, nos vertus, nos vices, y sont personnifiés." He defends their use by quoting from Boileau (M. 8, p. 40). He explains the angel of light that appeared to Jacques Clément (M. 8, p. 366): "Ne voyez-vous pas que cette apparition poétique ne figure autre chose que l'imagination égarée d'un moine?" His predilection for allegory in the novel has already been noted in the *Introduction.* He takes Racine *fils* to task for the omission of such figures in his poem on Religion (M. 23, p. 173): "Tantôt je voudrais qu'il interrogeât la Sagesse éternelle, qui lui répondrait du haut des cieux; tantôt que le Verbe lui-même, descendu sur la terre, vînt y confondre Mahomet, Confucius, Zoroastre." Even with such views, Voltaire was himself not always prolific enough in poetic figures to suit

his critics. Just as the *Envieux* and his wife say to Zadig that "he has not the good Oriental style, because he does not make the hills dance like lambs and the stars descend from the heavens," so Desfontaines and the poet Roi, among others, took Voltaire to task for the lack of brilliant images in his poem on the Battle of Fontenoy. These lovers of allegorical figures called his poem *une froide gazette.* Voltaire replied to them as follows (M. 8, p. 379): "On peut, deux mille ans après la guerre de Troie, faire apporter par Vénus à Énée des armes que Vulcain a forgées, et qui rendent ce héros invulnérable; on peut lui faire rendre son épée par une divinité, pour la plonger dans le sein de son ennemi; tout le conseil des dieux peut s'assembler, tout l'enfer peut se déchaîner; Alecton peut enivrer tous les esprits des venins de sa rage; mais ni notre siècle, ni un événement si récent, ni un ouvrage si court, ne permettent guère ces peintures devenues les lieux communs de la poésie."

Nevertheless this love of figures, of brilliant images substituted for natural ones, of allegory, of symbolism in short, pervades all Voltaire's work. One need only pick up any volume of his

correspondence to convince oneself of this fact; his letters are replete with figures. It was only his good sound common-sense that kept him from abusing them "in the good Oriental style" mentioned above.

Before proceeding further, we need to define allegory. The words means, at bottom, the same as symbolism; it is "speaking of one thing under the image of another." But you cannot speak of one thing under the image of another without comparing them, or without having compared them. The only differences between allegory and symbolism are conventional, or they consist in the number of terms compared. "I am the vine and ye are the branches" is an allegory but the vine is here the symbol of Christ, and the branches are symbolic of his disciples. Allegory has come, however, to be associated chiefly, if not exclusively, with the personification of abstractions, as Peace, War, Strife, etc. But if one were describing the war-god, and brought under the symbol the Old Testament Lord of Hosts, leading in person his chosen people in battle and breaking the ranks of their enemies, together with the militant Machiavellian Prince, Frederick the Great, the

imagery is symbolism. If we are to make a distinction, then, it is this: allegory is the typically abstract, symbolism is the typically concrete. The one is out-of-nature, so to speak; the other exists, or may be conceived of as existing, since it is typical without loss of individuality.

The other reasons for Voltaire's use of symbolism are objective.

In the first place, it furnished him with a relatively safe medium of carrying out his oft-reiterated definition of liberty: *fari quae sentiat* (M. 33, p. 381). This was no mean advantage in a country under the bondage of a literary inquisition. Voltaire did not wish to spend his life in the Bastille, nor did he wish to languish in exile. Symbolism was his only recourse, unless he were willing to give up the career of a man of letters. The latter alternative was not to be thought of, even if it had been possible for him to resist his dominant taste. At the time of the first persecution to which he was subjected, that for his verses about the Regent and his daughter, he was urged, he says (*Lettres sur Œdipe,* M. 2, p. 13), to give up verse-writing. To all such admonitions in prose and verse he replied, he tells us, "par des vers." Much later

he inserted the following significant paragraph in his *Lettres sur Œdipe:* "Je me suis donc aperçu de bonne heure qu'on ne peut ni résister à son goût dominant ni vaincre sa destinée." He preferred his "slavery" in France, as he often calls his "malheureux métier d'homme de lettres," to liberty in foreign lands. "Pourquoi faut-il," he sighs at the time of the persecution for the *English Letters,* "pourquoi faut-il subir les rigueurs de l'esclavage dans le plus aimable pays de l'univers, que l'on ne peut quitter, et dans lequel il est si dangereux de vivre!" Now, by its very nature, one can hide beneath symbolism as under a shield and deal out blows in all directions; or at least in as many directions as there are ideas of which the symbol forms a part. For example, admitting that Pangloss is a symbol for all the spoken and written nonsense in Europe (for the word means "all tongues"), he can range successively or in curious mixtures the nonsense of as many individuals as he chooses under this symbol. And who shall convict him of satire? Which of his enemies would for a moment proclaim to the world that he thought Voltaire was caricaturing him? He possessed in a remarkable degree the gift of

seeing the ridiculous side of opinions, rather than of characters, and that is one of the well-recognized reasons why he did not succeed in comedy. It is also one of the best reasons for his success in symbolism. It is by virtue of certain conformities between the opinions, beliefs, and dogmas of the Christian religion and those of certain Oriental religions that Voltaire can strike the bigots of France *d'une main indirecte,* as Frederick expresses it. He says of himself through one of his interlocutors (M. 27, p. 21): "Il semble que vous vouliez parler de nos moines sous le nom de bonzes. Vous auriez grand tort; ne seriez-vous pas un peu malin?" That is putting it weakly; he was the most *malin* of all men. Everything that he wrote was looked upon with suspicion by his enemies, because of the subtile and insinuating power of suggestion oozing out of a thousand pores. Everybody knew in his day, and certainly everybody knows now, that he had the Christian religion, more than Mohammedanism, in mind, when he composed *Mahomet.* But what choice did the pope have, other than to accept his dedication of the tragedy? If he had refused it, Voltaire would have cried: "What! You

defend that fanatical religion and its infamous prophet? Or do you acknowledge that there is no difference between that religion and its prophet on the one hand, and Christianity and its founder on the other?" How plainly he discloses his purpose in *Mahomet,* when he tells us (M. 17, p. 103), that Mohammed was more of a Jansenist than anything else. Therefore, if Mohammed was a Jansenist, the God of Mohammed was the God of the Jansenists. And what was the God of the Jansenists? Voltaire tells us in his *Discours en vers sur l'homme* (M. 9, p. 388) what kind of God the partisans of absolute fatality worshipped:

"Les tristes partisans de ce dogme effroyable
Diraient-ils rien de plus s'ils adoraient le diable?"

One can easily see how far such association of ideas can lead, when the author of *Zadig* can mark here in a couplet the equivalence of God and the devil.

Voltaire's enemies were not deceived by his methods, but they had no proof against him. He often defied his enemies to find a single reprehensible proposition in his works. He could make his challenge with impunity. He was

past master in the choice and use of words. He does not deny the fall of man and the necessity of redemption; he simply says that human reason can not prove it. "What have I done," he exclaims, when the dogs of persecution bark at his heels, "what have I done, except to put revelation above reason?" He can not ridicule openly the innocence of our first parents, but he can ridicule its allegorical meaning under the Androgynes of Plato, under the symbolism of Corisandre, Hermaphrodix, Conculix. He does not deny the existence of the soul independent of the body; he does not say that God has given the faculty of thought to matter in certain organizations; he simply says that human reason cannot prove that God could not have done so. "What have I done," he cries again when persecuted, "except to give public confession of my belief in God's omnipotence?" And in the *Princesse de Babylone* he symbolizes his conception under the form of the phœnix, and explains what resurrection is (M. 21, p. 392).

Another reason, and not the least important, for Voltaire's use of symbolism, is its prevalence in Oriental literatures, especially in the

Bible and in the thousand interpretations of the dogmas of the Christian religion. Everything in antiquity is allegorical, is symbolical, he cries; it would seem that all antiquity spoke only in order not to be understood. He includes Grecian mythology in the same class; indeed, he makes the dreamings of Plato the very foundation of the Christian religion. How was Voltaire to explain the double nature in man, the two natures and the one will of Christ, the Androgynes of Plato, except by the sodomy of monasticism, "man by day and woman by night?" How could Jesus be the son of his mother and his own father, except by incest, like that of Œdipus King? How could Saturn devour his own children, except as a symbol for Time? How could Rome be Babylon, except by symbolism? How could Peter be a porter, a fisherman, a rock, and the vicar of Christ, himself the vicar of God, except by symbolism? How can all nations be blessed in the seed of Abraham, from whom they do not descend? How can the devil be a serpent? How can Balaam's ass talk? What is the origin of all metamorphoses, except the abuse of a metaphor? Such questions might be multiplied *ad infinitum.*

Voltaire's Method of Composition

Voltaire's method of composition has already been indicated: it is the raising of individual experiences into the realm of the typical, with an anti-religious tendency. When he fights an individual persecutor, he fights him, not as his individual enemy, but as the enemy of mankind; he becomes for Voltaire the symbol of persecution, but without losing his individuality. He may appear as a symbol for the devil, for the God of the Jansenists, for the inquisition of Rome, or the inquisition of the *garde des sceaux,* as the personification of the ferocious rapacity of the clergy; in short, in as many forms as Voltaire's imagination can create. Fundamentally Voltaire has but two sets of symbols: tolerance and intolerance: love and hate: wisdom and folly: generosity and envy: reason and religion: sense and nonsense; there is a sort of duality in his symbolism, like the duality of nature. He repeats over and over the allegory of the garden of Eden. He represents himself, under the name of his chief character, in a variety of paradisiacal situations, out of which he is kicked by some ambitious, envious, rapacious, or tyrannical brigand. This

brigand is always Intolerance, under some form or other, always the *Infâme,* in some way or other; and always, at the bottom of each episode, incident and character, there is some particular brigand whom the author has in mind especially. The general plan of both *Zadig* and *Candide* is this: Voltaire wants his definition of liberty: *fari quae sentiat.* That is his Astarté, his Cunégonde. Whoever interferes with that, the finest privilege of humanity, is *ipso facto* ranged under the symbol of the *Infâme,* without ceasing, however, as I have already said, to be an individual persecutor in a given situation. The only way to fathom Voltaire's symbolism is, therefore, to keep the type in mind and to trace the association of ideas by which certain individuals, with whom he has come into close personal relations, are subsumed under the type.

CHAPTER III

ZADIG

The purpose of this chapter is to determine the provenience of the name of the hero and its significance, by citing Voltaire's probable authorities and by internal evidence from the novel.

The Provenience and Significance of the Name

Hammer, apropos of the mystic love-story of Joseph and Zuleika, explains the name Zadig as the "Speaker of the truth," from the epithet given to Joseph when he had cleared himself of the accusation of Potiphar's wife. Joseph called upon a child in the cradle to testify for him. The child, which had never spoken before, told Potiphar to see whether Joseph's coat was ripped in front or in back. The coat was found to be ripped from behind, and this fact was considered conclusive evidence of the truth

of Joseph's story. Hence, in the manner of the Orient, of which numerous examples will occur to any reader of the Old Testament, Joseph received a new name: He-who-renders-true-witness, the Speaker-of-the-truth, or the Truth-teller, as Remy, following Hammer, translates it. But neither Remy nor Hammer assigned any reasons for thinking that Voltaire's hero was named in reminiscence of this episode.

I consider it of great importance to determine whether this interpretation is correct; for, if it is, it is bound to have influenced Voltaire in the whole conduct of his novel.

In the first place, was Voltaire acquainted with this episode? This question must be answered in the affirmative. We may take it for granted that he knew practically everything that had any connection with the Bible; that was his specialty. The story of Joseph and Zuleika, as treated by the Persian poets, is found, in considerable detail, in the Coran, and we know that Voltaire was well acquainted with the Mohammedan Bible. He would not have undertaken his tragedy of *Mahomet* without investigating his prophet's Bible. This study goes back as far as the period preceding his

trip to England. While at Rivière-Bourdet Voltaire, Thieriot, and Mme. de Bernières gave themselves up to historical dilettantism. Thieriot undertook the compilation of a history of Mohammed. While in England Voltaire was asked by his friend to procure him certain books bearing on the subject. The hunt for one of them, which proved to be worthless (entitled *Improvement of the Human Reason;* M. 33, p. 167), gave to Voltaire an opportunity of showing how anglicized he had become. His letters to Thieriot are in English, and he speaks of that "damned book."

It was during his stay in England that he became acquainted with the translation of the Coran by Sale; the translation which he ever afterward used, and which he frequently praises. He showed to some visitors at Ferney, long afterwards, this translation of the Coran, annotated marginally and with numerous slips of paper all through it for markings (M. 1, pp. 390–392: *Documents biographiques*). As early as 1734 he praised Sale's translation of the Coran (M. 27, p. 318). Therefore there is no reason for Seele, in his *Sources of Zadig,* to be uncertain whether Voltaire was acquainted with the whole Coran.

Voltaire could also have got, and probably did get, knowledge of the episode of Joseph and Zuleika from Herbelot. We know that he borrowed the *Bibliothèque orientale* from d'Argenson (M. 36, p. 182), and that he kept it during the period when we may suppose that he was writing, or gathering material for, his *Siècle de Louis XIV,* his *Essai sur les mœurs,* his tragedy *Sémiramis,* and his novel *Zadig.*

In the second place, what reasons are there for thinking that Voltaire had this epithet in mind, when he named his hero Zadig?

There are several reasons which might be adduced in support of this interpretation of the name: first, it would seem to be apt for Voltaire's symbolism; second, there are evidences of it in the character of some of the episodes; third, the Providence which the story of Joseph illustrates seems to be the Providence of the novel. Let us consider these points in their order.

The Aptness of the Epithet for Voltaire's Symbolism

Without giving Voltaire credit for a very profound knowledge of Oriental literatures, we

must acknowledge that he grasped quickly the fundamental spirit of those literatures. "Everything is figurative," he says repeatedly, "everything is allegorical in the East." It would seem that these people spoke only in order not to be understood. This character of Oriental thought was to him the secret of the abuse of the Bible in later centuries: the figure was taken for the letter, and the letter for the figure, to suit the ambitious schemes of a few leaders of the new sect of Christianity. The Jews called a just man the son of God (M. 27, p. 90); in that sense Jesus was the son of God. But how that figure of speech has been perverted and made the instrument of the "most cowardly and most detestable of all superstitions"! We can see, then, how such an epithet as the "Truth-teller" in a novel of the Orient would appeal to Voltaire. He aimed to be the "Truth-teller" *par excellence.* He was the *ministre de la vérité,* as Frederick called him. He appeals to Venus Urania, *vérité sublime,* as he apostrophizes the goddess. All the persecutions to which he was subjected came from his message of truth, as he saw it. And yet he rarely spoke his message of truth except in symbolic words

and figures. He could not do otherwise. To tell his message of truth about the Bible in the plain straightforward French prose, which he could handle with such conciseness and clearness, would be paving the way to a funeral pyre; to tell it in the manner of the Orient, in figures, in allegories, in allusions, in innuendos, in equivocal phraseology: what was that but the manner that Voltaire assumed in nearly all his publications, before his residence at the gates of Geneva? He had learned early in the school of experience to fight from covert, to bide his time, to strike swiftly and escape, to act the blind man and the deaf man on occasion.

Internal Evidence from the Novel

There are episodes in the novel that point to the meaning of Zadig as the "Truth-teller." At bottom, the episode of Joseph and Zuleika illustrates a Solomonic judgment. Joseph's innocence is established by a clever device. Similar devices are met with in the novel, such as the broken tablet, the love of two brothers for their father, the love of two Magians for a young girl, the debt, etc. The episode of the

Chien and the *Cheval* is also a case in point, and needs to be considered in detail.

The Dog and the Horse

This episode illustrates, among other things, the Oriental manner of telling the truth and the dangers attending it. The common proverb in the Orient, according to Herbelot (Vol. I, p. 581), used as an excuse by the people who are afraid of getting into trouble for knowing and for saying too much, is: *Je n'ai vu ni le chameau ni le chamelier; ou bien, je n'ai vu ni le chameau ni son petit.* The story which gave rise to this proverb must be considered the immediate source of Voltaire's episode. In his studies in the sciences, in history, in philosophy, Voltaire was afraid of saying too much. The premature publication of his materials for the *Siècle de Louis XIV* aroused persecutions because of the author's remarks about the court of Rome (M. 35, p. 361). His *Lettres philosophiques,* especially his remarks about Pascal and Locke, caused him to be excommunicated and burned, as he calls the decree of the Parliament against his publication. He was afraid of saying too much in his competitive essay for the prize

offered by the Academy of Sciences, because the philosophy of Descartes still ruled at Paris. Mirepoix especially persecuted Voltaire for saying, with Locke, that God could have given to organized matter the faculty of thought, just as matter is organized to have sensations. Voltaire's aim was to account naturally for the fabulous being called the soul, just as he would account naturally for the fabulous being called the devil. These are two phases of one and the same question. The Christian religion posits the fall of man, into whose body the devil entered, as an allegory of the evil in the world and an explanation of the astonishing contradictions in man. Voltaire replied, in his remarks on Pascal, that one might just as well say that the dog that caresses and bites has a double nature, or that all horses were once in paradise until one of them ate some oats and caused the whole species to be condemned to a life of suffering. Thus Voltaire is persecuted, like Zadig, even by beings which do not exist.

This episode of the griffon is similar to the one which we are considering. Everybody is speaking about the griffon, although nobody knows anything about it, not even whether it

exists. Voltaire frequently refers to the Mosaic law prohibiting the eating of the griffon, the ixion (M. 25, p. 65; M. 18, p. 124, etc.). These animals must have disappeared from the face of the earth, if they ever existed. Voltaire elsewhere (M. 9, p. 427) uses the name griffon as *celui qui griffonne,* and Cador uses it here in the sense of *celui qui a des griffes.* Zadig has, he says, many griffons in his poultry yard, and does not eat them. He refers to the cock, as is evident from Voltaire's use of the word in his reply to the criticism of the Abbé Foucher (M. 27, p. 435): *Ne tuons jamais le coq,* etc. It is simply one of Voltaire's numerous illustrations of the persecutions to which one is subjected in the name of beings which nobody understands, and the very existence of which can not be proven.

The episode of the Dog and the Horse is, like that of the griffon, an outgrowth of Voltaire's *English Letters.* Mirepoix had persecuted him for saying that our faculties developed like those of the other animals, by use, by experience. Voltaire's argument tended to insinuate that if man had an immortal soul, then a dog had one also, or a flea, if you will. There is

something divine about a flea, he says; it can jump fifty times its length. Thus this episode is, first of all, an allegory of the way we see: how we judge form, size, distance. Voltaire was the first to report in France the theories of light of Newton and the experiments of Cheseldon (M. 18, p. 402 ff.). The latter proved, by operating on a youth for cataract that the image formed on the retina by an object did not enable us, by itself, to see that object as it was. Réaumur, who seems to be ridiculed by Voltaire in the introductory paragraphs of this episode, performed a similar experiment in France, but the fruits of it were lost to science because the operator made no experiments and allowed no one else to make them.

There are probably other allusions in the episode, a few of which may be indicated here.

In speaking of his studies for the *Siècle de Louis XIV* (M. 33, p. 513), Voltaire says that he is like a painter who looks at objects a little differently from other men, noticing lights and shades which escape inexperienced eyes. That is precisely the faculty that Zadig has acquired. Voltaire arrived at the knowledge of the Man with the Iron Mask during this period. The

daughter of the Regent had secured from her father, by what a price! the secret, or what purported to be the secret. Voltaire had, it would seem, been persecuted by the Regent for "what he had seen," namely, the incest and debauchery of the Regent. In view of the name of the King, Moabdar, reminiscent of the *mère des Moabites* of Voltaire's early satires, it is probable that the episode of the Dog and the Horse is symbolical of the Regent and his daughter. The episode of the escaped prisoner would then be explainable as a reference to the Man with the Iron Mask.

Another allusion in the episode is Voltaire's characterization of the old *âne de Mirepoix* as a *cheval.* His accoutrements are also as precious as those of the *cheval du roi des rois;* he was in every sense *un opulent fripon,* and in every sense a *cheval* of the King. Voltaire arrived at his name by the following equations: Chiron = Preceptor of Achilles; Achilles = King; Mirepoix = Preceptor of King; Mirepoix = Chiron. But Chiron was a horse with the head of a man, while Mirepoix had no head; therefore Mirepoix = *cheval* (cf. M. 36, p. 275).

Voltaire refers in the same way to the poet

Roi, who was *chevalier de l'ordre de saint Michel, i. e., cheval. de saint Michel, i. e., cheval,* not *roi,* but at most the *cheval du roi.*[1]

[1] There is much in the correspondence of Voltaire at this time about a *chien* and a *chienne.* Mlle. Quinault had given to Voltaire the subject of the *Enfant prodigue,* which he composed, he tells us, to serve as a reply to the impertinent *Épitres* of Jean Baptiste Rousseau. It is, therefore, by a figure common to Voltaire, the child of the poet and the actress (M. 34, p. 54, 55, 183, 184). Great precautions are taken that there be no clique to prevent its success. Voltaire does not wish it to be known that he is the author; he has his reasons, he says, but he fails to disclose them. Voltaire refers to his comedy as his *petit chien noir* (M. 34, p. 142). He writes to Mlle. Quinault (M. 34, p. 558) that his *petits chiens noirs* are called Zamore and Alzire (the names of the hero and the heroine of his tragedy of *Alzire,* and evidently regarded as the offspring of the original *chien,* the *Enfant prodigue*). He carries out the figure (M. 35, p. 48): *Zamore et Alzire vous saluent à quatre pattes.* In his letter of October 19, 1736 (M. 34, p. 150 f.), he calls his two black dogs *chien* and *chienne,* brother and sister, who are to go on producing from incest to incest. Other references are (M. 35, p. 176): "Alzire est grosse de Zamore. Voulez-vous que le premier-né s'appelle Ramire?" And (M. 35, p. 227): "J'aurai l'honneur de vous envoyer un Ramire et vous nous donnerez la merveille des chiens que vous promettez." He feels that Zulime must be made better *pour dépayser le monde.* He says (M. 35, p. 456): "Nous avons déjà nommé les deux enfants de vos chiens noirs, l'un Ramire, et l'autre Zulime. Mais j'ai peur que cela ne ressemble aux gentilshommes ruinés de ce pays-ci (*i. e.,* Brussels), qui se font appeler Votre Altesse;

Other Episodes which Illustrate Solomonic Judgments

The other episodes which illustrate Solomonic judgments come under the relations of Zadig to Moabdar's court or to the Arabian tribes of Sétoc. The first one of this nature is the decision of the question, to whom the prize of virtue belongs. Voltaire had already indicated in his *Discours en vers sur l'homme* (M. 9, p. 388 f., p. 423), who was entitled to be called virtuous. That title belonged to Pucelle, who gave to his younger brother the fortune that his mother had

il faut que l'on ait fait une grande fortune pour donner ainsi son nom.''

It is not easy to determine just what Voltaire meant by this sort of figure. As offspring of Voltaire's genius, his works were brother and sister, and if they kept on producing from incest to incest, the thought is analogous to the charge made by Rousseau against Voltaire (*Épitre à Thalie, Œuvres de Jean Baptiste Rousseau, Nouvelle édition,* Bruxelles, 1743, Vol. 3, p. 467):

''Loin tout rimeur enflé de beaux passages
Qui sur lui seul moulant ses personnages
Veut qu'ils aient tous autant d'esprit que lui,
Et ne nous peint que soi-même en autrui.''

It is certain that there is some connection between Rousseau and the *chien* or *chienne* of Voltaire's correspondence and the episode in *Zadig;* that is already obvious from the purpose Voltaire had in composing the *Enfant prodigue.* It is probable that Mlle. Quinault immediately

deprived him of. This episode is found in *Zadig,* with slight modifications and with an obvious application to religion. It is a question of the love of two sons for their father. Zadig gives the prize to the one who has aided his sister. Voltaire wished to decide the question over which the Jansenists and the Molinists wrangled, as to who loved God best. His decision establishes the superiority of good works over vain monuments, as an indication of one's love for the author of one's being. A similar question is decided by him in reference to the

recognized Voltaire as the author of *Zadig* by means of this episode, for he alludes to the "black dog" only in his letters to her. Voltaire wrote to d'Argental (M. 36, p. 534; Oct. 10, 1748), that he did not wish to pass for the author of *Zadig;* why should people mention his name in that connection? "Quinault, Quinault-comique . . . ne cesse de dire que j'en suis l'auteur. Comme elle n'y voit rien ne mal, elle le dit sans croire me nuire; mais les coquins, qui veulent y voir du mal, en abusent." If Mlle. Quinault saw no harm in the episode, she must have referred it to Voltaire's *Enfant prodigue.* When this comedy appeared in published form, it was so mutilated by the publishers that Voltaire, by a figure common to him, says that it is lame, so lame that it can hardly walk (M. 34, p. 525, p. 531). In that respect it is like the *chienne de la reine.* As it has given birth to a numerous progeny it can also be compared to the *chienne de la reine, qui a fait depuis peu des chiens.*

two Magians who claim a woman whom they have instructed in their mystic love; she belongs to the one who will bring up her child in the duties of friendship and citizenship.

Voltaire had given the title of virtuous to Pelisson, who defended Fouquet from the depths of his prison. This appears also in *Zadig*. The King had disgraced his prime minister, and Zadig alone speaks well of him.

Voltaire gives the title of virtuous to Normand, to Cochin, whose eloquence protected the orphan. He does not give it to the indolent Germont, who fears to speak for his friend when Sejanus oppresses (reference to Thieriot, whose luke-warmness in the period of the *Voltairomanie* Voltaire could hardly forgive); nor to the babbling Griffon, whose mercenary pen made an insipid libel instead of a jurist's brief (reference to Mannory, at the time of Voltaire's *démêlés* with the poet Roi and Desfontaines).

Zadig proves, just as Voltaire proved in all his works, the puerility of religious disputes and the folly of attaching importance to religious ceremonies. Two parties had quarreled for 1500 years about the manner of entering the temple of Mithra. Voltaire

shows by the date here that he has Christianity in mind. He says (M. 27, p. 38), that Christianity is the only religion in the world in which, for more than 1400 years, there has been an almost continuous series of persecutions on account of theological arguments.

There is probably a reference here to Voltaire's manner of entering the French Academy. One of the virulent satires current at this time was the *Discours prononcé à la porte de l'Académie,* in which Voltaire was scurrilously treated. Voltaire had failed in several attempts to enter the Temple of the Sun, and he desired to enter now *par la grande porte.* In other words, he wanted to enter the French Academy like Zadig: *à pieds joints.*

The other illustrations of the wisdom of Solomon are chiefly under the various episodes connected with Sétoc. Because Zadig has slain a jealous fool, Clétofis, he is sold into slavery. This is allegorical for the servitude of a man of letters in France, of which Voltaire complains so often in his correspondence. The only way to break his chains is gradually to enlighten his master, who was ignorant rather than wicked. Zadig begins his work almost at once.

His master has paid less for him than for his valet. When Sétoc is obliged to apportion the burdens of a camel upon the backs of his slaves, he laughs to see them walk with body bent forward. Zadig informs him of the reason. He tells him about the simplest physical laws, such as the law of equilibrium, of specific gravity. The allusion is, of course, to Voltaire's *Éléments de la philosophie de Newton,* with the famous law of gravitation which the French were so slow in accepting. It is Voltaire in the bondage of the *garde des sceaux,* the famous d'Aguesseau, who refused his approbation for the *Éléments,* and who refused to give permission to print to the author of a novel in which there was a heretic, unless said heretic should be converted in the last chapter! It is quite possible that Voltaire is punning on his name (*seau = sot*) and on his function (*garde des sceaux = garde des sots*), in the name Sétoc. Voltaire often laments that the simplest laws of science were unknown to his countrymen until the publication of his work. The following is a typical example (M. 27, p. 188): "Il y a cent mille âmes dans Paris qui, en soufflant le feu de leurs cheminées, n'ont jamais seulement

pensé à la mécanique par laquelle l'air entrant dans leur soufflet, ferme ensuite la soupape qui lui est attachée. . . . Le nombre est très petit de ceux qui cherchent à s'instruire des ressorts de leur corps et de leur pensée. De là vient qu'ils mettent souvent l'un et l'autre entre les mains des charlatans." This is true of the Seigneur Ogul, whose slaves seek a basilisk which they intend to cook in rose water in order to cure him of an indigestion. The Seigneur Ogul has promised to marry the slave who shall first find him a basilisk. "Son médecin, qui n'a que peu de crédit auprès de lui quand il digère bien, le gouverne despotiquement quand il a trop mangé" (M. 21, p. 81). The allusion is probably to the King, whose illness at Metz caused so much excitement in court circles. The doctor-confessor of the King prevailed upon him to dismiss his mistress, Mme. de Châteauroux, in order to appease the wrath of heaven and thus be cured of his ailment. The name Ogul is probably an anagramme for Gulo (since the Seigneur Ogul is a glutton), with a reminiscence of Mogul. Thus everything, even to the basilisk (the "little king" curer), points to the Seigneur Louis XV. Zadig teaches this ignor-

ant gourmand the virtues of the medicine bag, *i. e.*, the value of exercise and sobriety, as the only king-curers. Voltaire had already treated this topic in his *English Letters* (M. 22, p. 50). He explains how the idea of miraculous cures arose. Sickness was observed to increase at the full moon; therefore the moon was the cause of it. A sick man, who found himself better after having eaten lobsters, gave rise to the belief that they purified the blood because they were red when boiled!

One of the first things that Zadig teaches Sétoc is how to recover a debt from a Hebrew, without having any proof of the indebtedness. The money had been counted out to the Hebrew on a large stone, and Zadig makes the stone testify for him. Since the Hebrew knows where the stone is, the money must have been paid to him. He is condemned to be bound to the stone, without food or drink, until the money is paid. The Hebrew soon disgorges, and Zadig and the stone enjoy great renown in the desert. The Hebrew who receives loans on the stone and who appropriates everything he can as soon as there are no witnesses to the transaction is the Church, from the time of Pope Gregory down. Voltaire

was the first to raise his voice, he tells us (M. 18, p. 441), against the pretensions of the clergy. The way to make them disgorge is to bind them to the stone; if the stone, Peter, is in the desert, they will pay rather than be bound to it; if it is in heaven, they will pay with even greater celerity rather than be sent thither. Pope Gregory's canonization in the eighteenth century was fresh in Voltaire's mind at this time, when he was composing the *Essai sur les mœurs* (cf. Beuchot, 16, p. 89). The Pope, he notes (*ibid.*, p. 84), had sent the following message to Rudolph, Duke of Suabia: *Petra dedit, Petrus diadema Rodolpho.*

It is probable that there is some experience of Voltaire at the bottom of the episode. The Marquis de Luchet relates that Voltaire had lent some money to a man who refused to pay him because the poet had neglected to take the precaution of having witnesses to the transaction, and had nothing in writing to prove his claim. Many people are sueing him, he says (M. 34, p. 88), for debts long since paid, in the hope that he has lost his receipts in his numerous voyages. That is especially true of Jore, the *libraire du clergé,* publisher of the *Lettres philosophiques*

who tried to make Voltaire pay what he would have gained if the edition had not been seized. He was thrown into the Bastille until he should give up the edition. It is possible that the Bastille is the famous stone to which the bad creditor was to be bound until he disgorged.

Sétoc adores the stars because they are so brilliant and so far away. Zadig lights a number of candles and adores them in the presence of his master. Sétoc penetrates the significance of the action of his slave and adores, from then on, the maker of the stars. Voltaire is alluding to the idolatrous practices of the Christians in the adoration of images, etc., as shown in the *Dictionnaire philosophique* (M. 17, p. 61, under *Adorer*): "Dans d'autres pays, il faut à midi allumer des flambeaux de cire, qu'on avait en abomination dans les premiers temps," and a convent, in which this cult of candles should be abolished would cry out that the light of the faith was extinguished and that the world was coming to an end.

Zadig also puts an end to the burning of widows on the funeral pyres of their husbands, an abuse which exists simply because it is

ancient. Voltaire makes the necessary rapprochement between the *dévotes* of Malabar and the *dévotes* of France (M. 24, p. 247, also *Précis du Siècle de Louis XV,* M. 15, p. 327, and *Essai sur les Mœurs,* Beuchot, 15, p. 79), which explains this episode. The former destroy their bodies, the latter give up legitimate pleasures and subject themselves to needless privations, and both act contrary to the purpose of nature; both are dominated by the vain idea that these bodies of theirs will arise more beautiful than before. Let us consider this episode in its relation to Voltaire's literary activity in France.

The Episode of Almona

This episode is directed first of all against the Jansenists, who would destroy all passions in man, except that of religious fanaticism. Every natural impulse towards the enjoyment of the senses was for the Jansenites a mortal sin (cf. M. 21, p. 275). In the second place, this same tendency was manifested in the monastic system, by which men and women dissociated themselves from the activities for which they were created, and buried themselves alive, so to speak. Voltaire had no patience with such

abuses. He continually raises his voice against them. Ever since his return from England he had directed his attacks against the Jansenists: in his *English letters,* in the *Mondain,* in the *Discours en vers sur l'homme.* In his fifth *Discours* (*Sur la nature du plaisir*), he uses a figure quite similar to the destruction by fire in the episode of Almona. He admires, he says, and does not pity, a heart that chains its desires, "et s'arrache au genre humain pour Dieu qui nous fit naître . . . et brûlant pour son Dieu d'un amour dévorant, fuit les plaisirs permis pour un plaisir plus grand." But he does protest against the intolerance of such people. Let them burn themselves if they wish, but not make other people burn themselves, nor despise in their hearts those whom they leave behind. Such people are less the friends of God than the enemies of mankind. This ridiculous master of the new stoics (*i. e.,* Pascal), wishes to destroy one's being, deprive one of one's nature. Voltaire reminds him and his followers of the daughters of Pelias, who, thinking to rejuvenate him, cut him up and boiled him, but could not bring him to life again. That is symbolic of the Jansenists, the poet

cries; they wish to change man, and they destroy him.

Thus Almona represents the victim of this false conception of the Jansenists, who drew it, as all Christians have drawn it, from the promises of Christ, that whoever should lose his life shall find it, and whoever would save his life shall lose it. It was this false conception of self-renunciation which sent so many Christians rejoicing to the funeral pyres of martyrdom and which filled the monasteries and the convents.

Voltaire wished to belittle their motives, and, in general, he undoubtedly was not far wrong. They wished to attract attention to themselves, to show that they were better than other people. They wished to enjoy the consideration which attends the odor of sanctity. Mme. Dorfise, the Prude, in Voltaire's comedy of that name, acts from such motives. The same is true of Bababec and the fakirs (M. 21, p. 103): "Bababec perdait son crédit dans le peuple; les femmes ne venaient plus le consulter: il quitta Omri, et reprit ses clous pour avoir de la considération." The reason why the women of Malabar burn themselves is that it is the custom, and one would lose caste in not conforming to it (M. 18,

p. 96; article on Suicide, published in 1739), just as it the custom in Japan for a man who has been insulted to open his own vitals, and his opponent must do likewise or be forever dishonored. The Christian renegade Pellegrinus burned himself in public for the same reason that a fool among us sometimes dresses up as an Armenian, in order to attract attention to himself (M. 18, p. 37). But that is nothing, Voltaire adds, in comparison with the 100,000 Europeans who have been burned by the Inquisition for the greater glory of God and the salvation of their immortal souls, and all for dogmas which nobody understands.

Zadig convinces Sétoc that it is ruinous to the state for widows to burn themselves; they might better give useful citizens to it. This reason is one of the most frequent in Voltaire's works. The following is a typical reference (M. 23, p. 504): "Dans nos climats il naît plus de mâles que de femelles, donc il ne faut pas faire mourir les femelles: or il est clair que c'est les faire mourir pour la société que de les enterrer dans nos cloîtres, où elles sont perdues pour la race présente, et où elles anéantissent les races futures." Note the equivocal use of *faire mourir*

and *enterrer les filles.* The latter figure suggests to Voltaire the comparison of nuns to *des terres incultes; il faut cultiver les unes et les autres* is his advice (*Dialogue entre un philosophe et un contrôleur général des finances,* M. 23, p. 504).

The particular allusion in this episode of Almona is probably to Voltaire's *Épitre* to the Marquise de Rupelmonde, the widow with whom he traveled to Holland in 1722 (M. 9, p. 357 ff.). Of her Duvernet says: "Elle joignait à une âme pleine de candeur et un penchant extrême pour la tendresse une grande incertitude sur ce qu'elle devait croire." She confided her doubts to Voltaire. To save her from the fate of the *dévotes* of Malabar and the *dévotes* of France, he composed the *Épitre,* successively known as the *Épitre à Julie, Épitre à Uranie,* and *Le Pour et Le Contre.* The Kehl editors speak of it as follows (M. 9, p. 357): This work contains the principal reproaches against the Christian religion and a refutation of the arguments of the *dévots persuadés et les dévots politiques.*

The gist of the *Épitre* is this: there are no horrors beyond the grave for the just; God

does not demand the sacrifice of our being, but the use of our talents. All homage is received by God, but he demands none, and none honors him. The pitiless Jansenist will find less clemency at his throne, despite his sacrifices, than the just man.

There was the menace of great danger in the publication of this *Épitre* in 1732. Langlois, the secretary of the Chancellor d'Aguesseau, when asked his opinion of it, told his master that Voltaire ought to be put where he would never again have the opportunity to use pen and ink. M. de Vintimille, Archbishop of Paris, and famous for his gourmandise, complained strongly to H. Hérault, *lieutenant général de police.* Voltaire *fit le mort,* as one editor expresses it; he took no notice of the lenten refutations of his work. He denied to the Chancellor that he was the author of it; he had heard it recited, he said, by the Abbé de Chaulieu. The authorities were not deceived, but they had no case against him.

In *Zadig* Voltaire seems to have connected this episode with all his other publications against the Jansenists, especially his *Lettres philosophiques.* The friends of Pascal were revolted that Voltaire

should make fun of their master's ideas about religion and about poetry. Voltaire frequently laughs at Pascal's examples of poetic beauty: *bel astre, merveille de nos jours, fatal laurier,* etc. That expression of *bel astre,* and Voltaire's remarks about Newton's law of gravitation, which Voltaire called attraction, and which the ignorant people of France took for the occult ideas of antiquity, are the sources of the form in which the accusation against Zadig is cast. He is accused of horrible blasphemies against the heavenly bodies, for which he must be burned, as well as for having diverted from the priestly coffers the spoils of the widows. So Voltaire's *Lettres philosophiques* were condemned to be lacerated and burned by the Parliaments of Paris and Rouen, but Voltaire does not report it that way; he uses a figure of speech. It is he, the author, who has been excommunicated and burned at Paris and Rouen; if that continues he will be burned twelve times (M. 33, p. 442). He fled to Cirey, which he calls a desert; in other words, he is in *Arabie déserte,* which he will soon transform into *Arabie heureuse,* the paradise of the *Mondain,* the philosophic tendency of which is the same as that of the episode which we are

considering. In this *infâme persécution pour un livre* he is sustained by the friendship of Mme. du Châtelet (M. 33, p. 426; May, 1734), which surpasses by far the rage of his enemies. He seems to have thought of her and of Mme. de Richelieu as his "Almonas," since they finally secured the cessation of this persecution. "Voilà Mme. de Richelieu qui va enfin être présentée. Elle ne quittera point votre garde des sceaux qu'elle n'ait obtenu la paix" (M. 33, p. 542). The manner in which Almona puts the persecutors to shame is simply a vicious dig at the clergy, with the Archbishop of Paris at their head. It is no more to be taken seriously than the titles which she gives to the Archbishop (M. 21, *Fils ainé de la grande Ourse, frère du Taureau, cousin du grand Chien*). It is in the same style as the manner in which Zadig appeases the old Magian Yébor, by the gift of a maid of honor *à laquelle il avait fait un enfant.* The old Bishop of Mirepoix had made his way in the world through the influence of titled *dévotes,* whose confessor he was. Such hypocrites, says Voltaire (M. 18, p. 350), always had a little serail of six or seven old *dévotes,* who had been discarded by their lov-

ers. So here with the priests of the stars; they are susceptible of no influence except that of carnal lust.

My third reason for thinking that Voltaire had the epithet of the "Speaker-of-the-truth" in mind in naming his hero Zadig is drawn from the philosophic tendency of the novel. As applied to Joseph the epithet seems peculiarly appropriate for the bearer of Voltaire's message about Providence, whose ways are not our ways. The story of the Patriarch is, in fact, an epitome of the Providence of Christianity. It is the lover of individual men and particular nations, at the expense of other individual men and other nations. Joseph was sent into Egypt, according to the Biblical account, to prepare a place for his brethren, that is, he was sent there by the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to enslave a whole nation (the Egyptians, who became, through Joseph, the slaves of the Pharao), and all for the sake of a "vagabond race, sullied with all the crimes known to the history of human folly."

Joseph was sold into slavery by his brethren from envy; here appeared the rôle of the *Envieux,* as it appears in *Zadig,* and as it appeared

in Voltaire's life. The heroes experience severally all its potentialities, even to the slavery motif, which is so often reflected in Voltaire's correspondence. Joseph was finally united to his Zuleika, Zadig to his Astarté, and Voltaire finally bowed to the Church in order to get into the French Academy. Each hero had emerged triumphantly from all his trials and tribulations. Rousseau and Desfontaines were in their graves, Roi was the execration of all honorable men, Mirepoix was sent into semi-exile, in order to relieve him of the danger of choosing badly among the servants of God for the posts of honor in the French capital (M. 36, p. 357), while Voltaire, covered with the ægis of the vicar of Christ, had become one of the Immortals, historiographer of France, and *gentilhomme ordinaire de la chambre du roi,* with the privilege of selling his patent (which brought him about 60,000 francs) and retaining the title. And how had he accomplished it all? Not differently from the symbolism of *Zadig,* with the hero's submission to Providence, not differently from the Patriarch Joseph, with his riddles. The *Princesse de Navarre* and the favor of the Pompadour on the one hand, and Voltaire's

submission to the Church on the other, had accomplished what all his serious work, his real services, had failed to accomplish.

In Voltaire's first open letter to prove his orthodoxy (M. 36, p. 191), Voltaire proclaims his love of religion, "a religion which makes one great family of all men, and whose practices are founded on tolerance and good works." Zadig does the same thing at Bassora (M. 21, p. 61): "Il lui paraissait que l'univers était une grande famille qui se rassemblait à Bassora." He convinces the representatives of all sects, all of whom are merchants, that they are, at bottom, of one faith; they adore the Maker of the Universe, and not those who have constituted themselves his prophets and instructed mankind in his name. Voltaire had already given expression to a similar thought in Holland, whither he had gone with Mme. de Rupelmonde (M. 33, p. 74). The cities of Holland, like Bassora, were great commercial centers, and like the Bassora of *Zadig* all cults seemed to flourish side by side. "Je vois des ministres calvinistes, des arminiens, des sociniens, des rabbins, des anabaptistes, qui parlent tous à merveille, et qui, en vérité, ont tous raison." So Zadig speaks of

the sects of Bassora; he tells them that they are all agreed, all are right, without knowing it.

This episode was probably suggested to Voltaire by his letter above mentioned and by his remarks while at The Hague. It is probable that Bassora is meant to be a linguistic equivalent for the Netherlands.

Voltaire's idea of a religion which made one great family of all men was not the religion which could open the doors of the Academy to him. In order that the *grâce efficace* should descend, to speak in the phraseology which he likes to use, he had to give evidence of his love of the Christian religion as understood and practiced in his day. That Voltaire accomplished by dedicating *Mahomet* to the Pope and by a profession of faith and orthodoxy, in his open letter to the Jesuits.

In addition to the reasons which have already been given in support of the interpretation of the name Zadig as the "Truth-teller," there are others of less significance, to which, however, attention might be called. He writes to Cideville about his poem on the Battle of Fontenoy, in reference to the Maréchal de Noailles, who, having no command (although he ranked the

Maréchal de Saxe, the commanding officer), was obliged to *look on* while others won imperishable glory (M. 36, p. 366): "Les deux vers qui expriment qu'il n'est point jaloux et qu'il ne *regarde* que l'intérêt de la France sont un petit trait de politique, si ce n'en est pas un de poésie; et ce sont précisément ces vérités qui donnent à penser à un lecteur judicieux. Ces traits si éloignés des lieux communs, et ces allusions aux faits qu'on ne doit pas dire hautement, mais qu'on doit faire entendre; ce sont là, dis-je, ces petites finesses qui plaisent aux hommes comme vous, et qui échappent à ceux qui ne sont que gens de lettres."

Apropos of a problem which he has stated in the form of a riddle, as to which of the three princesses which the Queen of Poland has given to reigning houses of Europe is the most virtuous and brings the greatest happiness to her subjects, he says (M. 36, p. 495): "Rien ne prouve mieux combien il est difficile de savoir au juste la vérité dans ce monde; et puis, monsieur, les personnes qui la savent le mieux sont toujours celles qui la disent le moins."

Perhaps nowhere in *Zadig* does Voltaire show more clearly his method of attesting the truth

in the form of equivocal phrases than in the address of the hero to the judges after the *cheval du roi des rois et la chienne de la reine* have been found. Zadig has been fined four hundred ounces of gold for having seen (with his judgment) what he had not seen (with his eyes). He propitiates his judges and satirizes the jurisprudence of France in the following speech, full of *équivoques:* "Étoiles de justice, abîmes de science, miroirs de vérité, qui avez la pesanteur du plomb, la dureté du fer, l'éclat du diamant, et beaucoup d'affinité avec l'or," etc. The *équivoques* are charming, and none the less doubly edged with satire. Voltaire had become disgusted with the jurisprudence of France in his early apprenticeship in a lawyer's office. He lauds Desbarreaux, who threw the documents of a lawsuit into the fire and paid the plaintiff the amount for which the suit was brought. He reproduces a similar episode in *Zadig.* He likewise lauded his friend and guardian angel d'Argental, who, disgusted with the absurd forms and barbarity of the law, gave up his charge of *conseiller au parlement* and retained only the title of *conseiller d'honneur.* It was fitting, Voltaire said, that he should bear the title of his estate!

The epithet of the "Witness-bearer" or the "Truth-teller" was also given by the Arabs to Aboubecre, father-in-law of Mohammed, to Jesus Christ, to the Virgin Mary, and to Aïcha, the only "virgin" wife of Mohammed. They all refer to the attestation of revealed truth. Aboubecre attested the truth of Mohammed's mission, of the divine origin of the Coran, of the Prophet's journey on his horse Borac through the heavens, etc. His daughter, the *Pucelle,* obtained the title by attesting the authenticity of various traditions regarding Mohammed, just as the Virgin Mary obtained it by attesting the divine birth and mission of Jesus Christ. So Zadig really gets the title, it would seem, from his interview with the angel Jesrad; at least not until then is he able to compass his ends. It is a strong testimony to the power of revelation over the minds of his countrymen, as indeed over the whole human race.

In all these applications of the name it is a question of a new cult. Voltaire could take the epithet seriously. His message to the world, or to be more explicit, to France, was in the interest of a new cult: the cult of reason. Voltaire likened himself to Jesus Christ, persecuted for

truth and righteousness (in his letter to Mirepoix, M. 36, p. 193 ff.). After such an example of submission to tribulation and death in the interests of truth, Voltaire can not complain. It it true, however, he adds, that one should defend oneself; not for the vain satisfaction of humbling and silencing an opponent, *mais pour rendre gloire à la vérité.*

These are some of the reasons for thinking that Voltaire had the epithet of the "Truth-teller" in mind in composing his novel. I will now consider some of the reasons for believing that this significance was not the only one intended by the author.

Other Connotations in the Name Zadig

There are good reasons for believing that Voltaire was not wholly concerned with the episode of Joseph and Zuleika in the creation of his novel and the name of his hero. In the first place, he is not likely to have chosen the name from any one source, for he would then have kept it in the form in which he found it. Herbelot (Vol. 1, p. 76) makes a clear distinction between Sadik and Seddik (or Siddik). The former means the "just" man, he says, while

the latter means "témoin fidèle et authentiques." There may have been a confusion between the two, due to the marking of the vowel points, but we must consider Herbelot as Voltaire's chief source. The first objection, therefore, to the interpretation of Remy and Hammer is based on linguistic grounds.

There are also internal evidences from the novel which point to the connotation of the just man in the name, if not its significance as such. The author stresses that characteristic in his hero. At the very beginning of the novel Zadig practices charity, in accordance with the precept of Zoroaster: "When you eat, give to eat to the dogs, though they bite you." The Mohammedans consider the giving of alms "une action de justice aussi bien que de charité" (Herbelot, description of the book "Sadik" or "Sadikat" of Abou-Haïan, which treats of justice and alms-giving). Also, at the very end of the novel it is distinctly stated that the reign of Zadig and Astarté was the reign of "justice and love." Of course, one may object, there can be no reign of justice and love until the truth has been established on its throne. Further, what causes Zadig to murmur against

Providence, after Itobad has stolen his white armor and made himself King of Babylon and husband of Astarté, is that all his "justice" has not only not brought him any reward, but has served only to his misfortune. Here again the reply is forthcoming: Zadig accomplishes his ends only after he has constituted himself a "témoin fidèle et authentique." After he has joined the ranks of the faithful adorers and given witness to revealed religion persecution ceases, and, it would seem, also the epithet of "just," since the angel says that the just man is always persecuted.

This connotation in the name is strengthened by the probable influence of the Hebrew Sadoc or Zadoc, which means the just man. As founder of the sect of the Sadducees, the ruling priestly class among the Jews, Sadoc would seem to stand for a philosophy which, in part, is reflected in the episode of the Angel and the Hermit. This sect believed, like the Jews under Moses, only in temporal rewards and punishments. Voltaire was greatly interested in the topic, both because of its connection with the mission of Christ, and because of Warburton's book on the mission of Moses. Warburton

started with the premise that a nation could not exist without the dogma of rewards and punishments after death, if it were not under a special Providence, *i. e.,* led by God in person, and rewarded and punished immediately. Since the books of Moses do not contain this dogma, the Jews must have been guided by this special Providence. For this specious reasoning Warburton was made a peer of the realm, with an enormous pension, and Voltaire sighs: *Il n'y a qu'heur et malheur dans le monde.*

It will be noticed that there is no question of rewards and punishments after death in the episode of the Angel Jesrad. Everything is temporal: either reward, or punishment, or trial, or foresight. The hero is exactly in the position of Job: he has been given over to the devil for trial of his faith, and he is rewarded when the caprice of his master is ended.

Besides the influences which have already been noted in the name of Voltaire's hero, there is the probability of influence from the name of the Persian poet Sadi or Saadi, both as regards the name and the character. We know that Voltaire was acquainted with the Persian poet. It is under his name that he masks himself in the

Épitre dédicatoire of the novel. Voltaire mentions a French translation of the Gulistan, and he himself translated a score of verses either from the original or from some Latin or Dutch translation. Without ascribing to him any profound knowledge of Persian literature, we may safely assume that he knew about as much of Saadi as was to be found in published books in his time. If he had had no other source than Herbelot he would have been fairly familiar with the character and the contents of the works of the illustrious Persian, because Herbelot quotes copiously from him.

There are a certain number of correspondences between the Persians and the French. Voltaire realized this in making Persepolis the symbol for Paris in his novel *Babouc.* The pun on *Persans* and *Parisiens* was too obvious for him not to make it, since he makes one on Paris (Parisis) and Isis, the Egyptian diety (M. 21, p. 417). Montesquieu had already given prominence to this similarity in his *Lettres persanes.* There are also a number of correspondences between the Persian Saadi and Voltaire. Saadi hated injustice, violence, and fanaticism (cf. Introduction to translation of the Boustan by

A. C. Barbier de Meymard, Paris, 1880); he rails at the *Envieux* as does Voltaire; he is replete with moral allegories illustrating the advantage of silence, or of speaking the truth as Saadi alone knows how, or pointed with allusions to the injustice of kings and the evils of religious fanaticism. The following are some of his maxims which find close parallels in *Zadig* or other works of Voltaire which show an Orientalizing tendency.

As Zadig shows the King of Serendib that he has only one honest aspirant to the post of *contrôleur général des finances* in seventy-four, so Saadi says to his sultan (cf. Boustan, *op. cit.*, p. 18): "Sur cent agents tu trouveras à peine un honnête homme."

As Arimaze is deficient in the divine spark which distinguishes man from the beast, so Saadi says (p. 51): "Ce n'est pas le titre d'homme qui donne la supériorité sur la brute, puisque celle-ci vaut mieux que l'homme criminel. Le sage seul est supérieur aux bêtes fauves."

Arimaze, *le malheureux,* is contrasted with Zadig, *l'heureux.* Voltaire says, in reference to the persecutors whom he has known (M. 25,

p. 466): "Jai connu des hommes bien méchants, bien atroces; je n'en ai jamais vu un seul heureux." So Saadi says (p. 51): "Mais de ma vie, je n'ai vu la félicité véritable être le partage des méchants."

Voltaire's usual practice of biding his time until he could take his enemy off his guard and then striking swiftly and with the greatest vehemence, finds an admirable parallel in the advice of Saadi (p. 71): "L'empire du monde appartient à l'habileté et à la ruse;[1] baise la main que tu ne peux mordre; prodigue les caresses à ton ennemi, comme tu le ferais à ton ami, en attendant l'occasion de l'écorcher vif!" How that would have appealed to Voltaire when he had to submit to men like Fleury, Hérault, Maurepas, and Mirepoix! It is not different from the fate that Frederick foresaw for the old *âne de Mirepoix* in case Voltaire ever succeeded in getting into the Academy. He writes to Voltaire (M. 36, p. 237):

"Malheur à Mirepoix si son panégyrique
Se prononce jamais en style académique!
Les arts qu'il offensa, pour venger leurs chagrins,

[1] This conviction is repeated in a score of places in Voltaire's *Essai sur les Mœurs.*

Renverseront sa tombe avec leurs propres mains;
Et la fade oraison que lui fera Neuville
Aura même en sa bouche un air de vaudeville."

The fable that Saadi relates of the negro and the péri (p. 284) is a closer parallel to the episode of Missouf and Clétofis than the episode in Molière (*Le mariage forcé*), which has been considered its source. When Saadi drives off the negro, the capricious beauty turns upon him like a fury and he barely escapes her claws. He draws this lesson from his adventure, which is an admirable statement of the lesson that Zadig draws from his adventure with Missouf: "De telles disgrâces n'arrivent pas à qui s'occupe tranquillement de ses affaires. De ma mésaventure j'ai tiré une leçon: désormais je fermerai les yeux sur les torts les plus avérés d'autrui." The giant negro and the brilliant péri seemed like the embrace of night and dawn. Voltaire used this comparison also in the *Princesse de Babylone* (M. 21, p. 431), where the King of Ethiopia, in the upper Egypt where the episode of Missouf takes place, is surprised by Amazan as he is about to ravish Formosante.

Compare the following figure with the adventure of Zadig with Azora, who wished to "cut

off his nose": "Pourquoi la main d'une femme, quand elle touche au fruit défendu, épargnerait-elle le visage de son époux? Si tu vois que ta compagne ne se résigne pas à la retraite, la raison et la prudence te défendent de vivre plus longtemps avec elle" (p. 297).

The following is a good epitome of Voltaire's diatribes against the *Envieux* (p. 305): "Tel homme mène une vie retiré: on lui reproche de dédaigner la société de ses semblables, on l'accuse de fausseté et d'hypocrisie. 'C'est un dive qui fuit le genre humain.' S'il est d'un caractère facile et sociable, on lui refuse l'honnêteté des mœurs et la sagesse. Le riche est déchiré à belles dents; 's'il y a un pharaon en ce monde, c'est lui.' Le pauvre, dont la vie se consume dans la misère, est un misérable, un vagabond; le derviche aux prises avec le dénuement, un être vil et disgracié du sort. Qu'une grande fortune vienne à s'écrouler, ils s'en réjouissent et disent: 'C'est un bienfait du Ciel; tant de faste et d'orgueil ne pouvait durer; les désastres suivent de près la prospérité.' Qu'un homme pauvre et sans appui parvienne à un rang élevé, leurs dents noires de venin déchirent 'cet infâme, ce parvenu *objet*.' As-tu produit une

œuvre utile et lucrative, tu es un ambitieux, un avare. Préfères-tu la méditation à la vie active, tu n'es plus qu'un mendiant, un parasite. Si tu parles, ils te comparent à un tambour sonore et creux; si tu gardes le silence, à une de ces figures peintes sur les murs des bains. L'homme patient est à leurs yeux un lâche, à qui la crainte fait courber la tête; mais devant la hardiesse et l'énergie, ils fuient en traitant le courage de folie."

These envious detractors of Saadi, whom he lashes without pity, listen disdainfully to his poetry. A hundred delicate and charming traits leave them insensible, "mais vienne une défaillance, ils poussent des cris d'horreur." The only source of their evil will is envy, he says, which conceals from them the perception of the beautiful.

The episode in *Zadig* of the fisherman, while primarily the outcome of Voltaire's *Épitre sur l'égalité des conditions* (one of the *Discours en vers sur l'homme*), is in strict conformity with Saadi's views. The moral of one of his stories is that everybody has his misfortunes, irrespective of temporal possessions.

In the Gulistan occurs the story of the drop

of water which became sad at the prospect of being lost in the immensity of the ocean. God took pity on it and made it a pearl which adorned the crown of the Great Mogul. This is, at bottom, the same apologue as the grain of sand in the episode of Arbogad in *Zadig*. Voltaire elsewhere (M. 17, p. 570) makes use of this apologue of the drop of water in the same sense as the one of the grain of sand. Voltaire never believed in the equality of earthly possessions, nor of physical and intellectual endowment. He tells us, first in the case of Abbé Linant, preceptor of the son of Mme. du Châtelet, and later in the case of Jean Jacques Rousseau, what the proud exponent of the equality of man must do: either he must work, or beg, or rob, or die of hunger. If the Creator has not made him a pearl, or a diamond, and if He does not do so on request, let him be content to remain a grain of sand or a drop of water; he is in numerous company.

It should also be noticed that Zadig is represented as a poet, whose verses come easily, impromptu, and that his misfortune comes from an envious man who makes use of these verses to compass his ruin. That, and the parallels which

we have noted, together with the signature of the *Épitre dédicatoire,* would seem to be conclusive evidence of some influence of the poet Saadi on the name and character of Zadig. As I have already said, Zadig is probably not chosen from any one name, since it appears in exactly the form of none that we have been able to discover. It is undoubtedly made up from several, and the more important sources of it have undoubtedly been indicated here. As to the character Zadig, there can be no question that it is Voltaire.

CHAPTER IV

MOABDAR

The purpose of this chapter is to determine the provenience and the significance of the name Moabdar, King of Babylon.

In the first place, what is Babylon? Does the author refer to the Babylon of the ancient Chaldeans, to the Egyptian Babylon, to the Babylon of the Mohammedan califs (*i. e.*, Bagdad), or to the Babylon of Saint Peter (*i. e.*, Rome)? He may refer to them all, but if he does so it is by virtue of the significance of the name: the City of Baal, and the City of Babel. He uses Babylon in both senses, the one being the literal significance of the name, and the other the result of a pun. Both meanings are closely allied, since most of the "babel" in the world is about the deity, under whatever name it be called. Voltaire might just as well have referred to Babylon as the "City where Pangloss is the preceptor of the human race." The King of Babylon may, therefore, be considered the King

of the Land of Pangloss, the King of the City of the Confusion of Tongues—God, in other words, either as God, or as represented by his vicars on earth: the Pope, on the one hand, and the various Kings, on the other. All of them are gods on earth, wielders of the thunder, authors of good and evil, and chiefly the latter.

It would seem obvious that Moabdar has some connection with Voltaire's early satires on the Regent and his daughter, the modern Lot and his daughter, *mère des Moabites.* Herbelot gives the significance of *dar* as *house, palace, residence, sojourn, place.* The name Moabdar would then signify the "King-of-the-house-of-Moab," *i. e.,* the descendant of Lot. The theme is one of incest, like that of Voltaire's satires on the Regent, like that of *Œdipe,* like that of the *Pucelle,* like that of *Candide,* and other works.

There is, I think, no reason to doubt that Voltaire was inspired to compose *Œdipe* by the incestuous relations of the Regent and his daughter, nor is there any reason to doubt, I think, that the same theme appears in the *Pucelle.* Voltaire seems to indicate this in the short-story of the *Comte de Boursoufle* (M. 32, p. 447). One of the reasons why the hero of

that story can not get into the French Academy is the fact that he has discovered why Jeanne d'Arc was called the *Pucelle d'Orléans.* He seems to mean that the *Pucelle d'Orléans* is the *Pucelle du duc d'Orléans,* is the *Pucelle* of the New Testament. As in his narrative of the expulsion of the Jesuits from China, Voltaire wished to ridicule in the *Pucelle* the cult of virginity, the birth of a god who is his own father by his mother, who is thus father and son and husband all in one, and also, by virtue of the reconciliation of the genealogy of Jesus, was the brother of Mary. This god of love, who is to rule the world, is symbolized by the winged ass of Saint Denis, who finally gets the favors of the *Pucelle.* As a phallic animal the ass is the god of love, and was the symbol, in reality or by a vicious invention of the enemies of the new cult, of the early Christians of Constantinople and Rome. Voltaire seems to indicate the association with the Bible in those enigmatical verses of his about *Joachim Prépucier,* for which no explanation has ever been offered (M. 32, p. 386). While the hero who governs France (*i. e.,* the Regent), defender of the State and the King, is bringing back abundance into

the land, Joachim Prépucier also wishes to make two young hearts content. His preparations to unite Daphnis and Cloé surprise the god of marriage; Joachim is not the person to unite a couple, but rather to separate them, taking them both for himself. The only way in which Daphnis and Cloé can avoid dissatisfaction with the dangerous master who has united them is to be friends, after having been lovers.

The genealogy of Christ was reconciled, Voltaire says (M. 32, p. 590 f.), in the following way: Joachim is the father of the Virgin; Élie is the father of Joseph; but Élie = Joachim, since (1), Élie is an abbreviation of Éliachim, and (2), from Éliachim you easily get Joachim. But Joachim Prépucier, as the name indicates, is the phallic god, who, like Hermaphrodix and Conculix, loves both sexes, and is a symbol for the Regent on the one hand, and the God of the Christians (as conceived by Voltaire) on the other.

In the *Pucelle* Voltaire represents the Regent as giving the signal for debauchery:

> "Vous répondez à ce signal,
> Jeune Daphné, bel astre de la cour;
> Vous répondez du sein du Luxembourg,

Vous que Bacchus et le Dieu de la table
Mènent au lit, escorté par l'Amour."

The *bel astre de la cour* was the Regent's daughter, the famous Duchess of Berry.

It was for satiric epigrammes against the Regent and his daughter that Voltaire was exiled May 4, 1716 (M. 1, p. 300), to Tulle, which was changed, at the request of his father, to Sully-sur-Loire. The order for this exile bore the significant words: "où ses parents pourront corriger son imprudence et tempérer sa vivacité."

The following is the epigramme against the Regent:

"Ce n'est point le fils, c'est le père;
C'est la fille et non point la mère;
A cela près tout va des mieux.
Ils ont déjà fait Étéocle;
S'il vient à perdre les deux yeux,
C'est le vrai sujet de Sophocle."

The Regent was in fact, at this time, in danger of becoming blind. The epigramme against the Duchess of Berry is as follows:

"Enfin votre esprit est guéri
Des craintes du vulgaire;

Belle duchesse de Berry,
Achevez le mystère.
Un nouveau Lot vous sert d'époux,
Mère des Moabites;
Puisse bientôt naître de vous
Un peuple d'Ammonites."

If, as is probable, this episode was the inspiration of *Œdipe,* the poet did not let it appear in his tragedy. He was not the man to give in dramatic form an episode of dissolute morals; nor was he the man to treat the subject of Sophocles as all his predecessors had done. He made of it his first sermon against the Jansenists and the God of the Jansenists, in whose religion the future of every individual is established, like the interacting cogs of a huge machine which turns, forever hidden, except for the present moment, beneath the blackness of an impenetrable veil; the theory of predestination. Œdipe is *inceste et parricide, et pourtant vertueux.* Jocaste reminds him that, in the midst of the horrors of destiny which overwhelm them, she has made the gods blush for having forced them into crime. It is important to notice that Voltaire makes the God of the Jansenists evil raised to the infinite, and the author of all evil (cf. M. 17, p. 476, 577, 581).

After the ban of exile had been removed from him in 1716, Voltaire seems to have been under surveillance. While rehearsals of *Œdipe* were going on he was betrayed by the French officer and spy of the Regent, M. Solenne de Beauregard. He was arrested *Jour de Pentecôte,* he says in his poem on the Bastille, but we can not, in view of his mania of connecting everything that happened to him with the Bible, be sure that he did not invent this trait in order to get in a bit of satire on the Holy Ghost. He had satirized the Father, in his epigrammes on the Regent; he had satirized the Son, in his *Puero Regnante;* it was now the turn of the Holy Ghost. His valet awakens him to tell him that the *Saint Esprit* is come. "Et moi de dire alors entre mes dents: gentil puîné de l'essence suprême, Beau Paraclet, soyez le bienvenu; n'êtes-vous pas celui qui fait qu'on aime?" But instead of the gentle dove of the Holy Ghost, he finds twenty ravens who have come to take him off to one of the King's castles; the King has heard of his verses and *bons mots,* and desires to give him free board and lodging. The poet protests in vain that he is not a court poet, and that he does not wish to become one. He

is carried off, forsaken by everyone, even by his mistress.

In a neatly turned epigramme, probably written at this time, Voltaire excused himself from the imputation of the authorship of the satires on the Regent, and invokes the testimony of the Duke of Brancas, through whose hands the verses on Joachim Prépucier also passed:

> "Non, monseigneur, en vérité,
> Ma muse n'a jamais chanté
> Ammonites ni Moabites.
> Brancas vous répondra de moi.
> Un rimeur sorti des Jésuites,
> Des peuples de l'ancienne loi
> Ne connaît que des Sodomites."

No better indication of Voltaire's daring could be found; for this apology was, in itself, a new satire on the morals of the Regent, who calls himself *un Socrate à cheveux gris.*

Voltaire, in his *Lettres sur Œdipe,* tries to give the impression that the Regent was convinced of his innocence of the satires imputed to him. He knows better, and he shows it by saying that the Regent gave him a pension of 2000 livres, not so much to recompense him, as to induce him to merit his protection. How

could he merit that protection? Only by dropping once for all the line of personal satire in which he had engaged. He tries, in his *Lettres sur Œdipe,* to give the impression that it was for the satire *Les j'ai vu* that he was persecuted. But the report of Beauregard (M. 1, p. 300) shows distinctly that the source of the watchfulness of the Regent was in the satires on his relations to his daughter. Voltaire hates the Regent for having exiled him in 1716; the Regent hates Voltaire for having shown *que sa Messaline de fille était une p. . . .* In his references to *Les j'ai vu* Voltaire is, I think, simply playing on words. This satire was three years old, and Voltaire could hardly have been suspected of being its author, and less likely to have been persecuted for it at that late date. What he is really thinking of is the persecution for *ce qu'il avait vu,* namely, the incest of the Regent. I have already indicated my belief that it was in reminiscence of this persecution, which was unpleasantly recalled to his mind by the *Voltairomanie* of Desfontaines, that Voltaire included in his novel the episode of the *Cheval du roi des rois et la chienne sacrée de la reine.*

I think that this episode with the Regent has

much to do with Voltaire's name, and, as it is intimately connected with his symbolism, I will include here my theory of it.

Voltaire's Name

The last letter in which he signs himself Arouet is dated from Châtenay, April 15, and this letter is probably the first that the poet wrote after his release from the Bastille and on beginning his short exile. The next letter in the correspondence, if properly classified (since it is undated), is the first in which the new name Voltaire occurs. It is to the Regent, and the name Voltaire occurs both in the body of the letter and at the end, and without the least word of explanation for the change. Since Voltaire explained to Jean Baptiste Rousseau his reasons for adopting a new name, is it probable that he would have been silent on this topic to the Regent, especially since all his misfortunes, of which he complains to Rousseau, came from the Regent? We may safely assume that he would not, and that he must have given to the Regent, before being released from the Bastille, some assurance of his future conduct. He admits, in this letter, that the Regent has corrected

him by a year in the Bastille; that is, that the purpose of the first exile, *pour corriger son imprudence et tempérer sa vivacité,* has been accomplished by his imprisonment. I take it that this name, Voltaire, is to be for him an ever present reminder of this fact, especially since he was so *volontaire* by nature. He will be from now on, not *M. de Volontaire,* but *M. de Voltaire,* a man vowed to circumspection. This interpretation of the name is not at all farfetched, in view of Voltaire's habit of punning on names. He notes similar names in his works. Tasso called himself *Pentito,* to mark his repentance for the years which he had wasted in the study of law. Scarron called his income from his books the rents from his *terre de Quinet,* that being the name of his publisher. D'Argental, as *conseiller d'honneur au parlement,* bears the name of his estate. Chabanon, because he composed an excellent exposition of a tragedy, which Voltaire calls a *vestibule,* is dubbed *M. du Vestibule.* Maupertuis is called *M. le marquis du cercle polaire.* In short, scores of such examples could be given.

Voltaire tells Rousseau that he had two reasons for adopting another name: he had been

so unhappy under the name of Arouet that he wished to see if his fate would be more propitious under a new name, and he wished to distinguish himself from the poet Roi. It seems that the name Roi was pronounced at that time quite the same as the last syllable of Arouet (cf. Nyrop). Thus Arouet is a king, but a king without a land. What does he do? He takes one, he steals one, not literally, like the other kings, but figuratively, like Scarron's *terre de Quinet,* and d'Argental's *terre d'honneur,* etc. His land is in the Republic of Letters. He will not give up the career of a man of letters, as he had been urged; on the contrary, he will become king of it, by symbolism! He was noble, on his mother's side; he was noble by sentiments and instincts; he was noble by talents. He lived in the *plus grand monde,* as one author expresses it, and was *enragé d'être bourgeois.* By the assumption of a place name he raised himself into the ranks of conventional nobility. He was better than his noble associates, for the entire nobility of Europe, from the greatest kings down, owed their titles, *in extremo,* to theft. This thought is repeated in a score of places in Voltaire's works; even the kingdom of heaven

was not different from the kingdoms of the earth: *violenti rapiunt illud.* No better exposition of this can be found than in the episode of Arbogad.

Voltaire made use of a variation on his name in the pseudonym under which he traveled in Holland: *M. de Revol.* He undoubtedly uses a combination of the name of Mme. de Rupelmonde, widow of M. de Recourt, and his name of Voltaire. He had been in Holland with her in 1722; he has to fly back there at the time of the persecution for the *Mondain:* he is M. de Revol, with a play on *voler,* to fly, and *court,* from *courir,* to run.

The name Voltaire would be, then, a clever *équivoque,* like all the symbolic names of which he makes use. It marks the author's desire to be a noble, both in the conventional sense and in the Republic of Letters; it marks his symbolism; it marks his plan of eluding persecution.

In connection with his satires on the Regent Voltaire took a characteristically bold attitude: he determined to dedicate his tragedy to the Regent, and actually did dedicate it to the wife of the Regent. This procedure is a genuine Voltaire-trait, exactly paralleled by his dedi-

cation of *Mahomet* to the Pope. Voltaire chose, in both cases, the protector whom he had really outraged, and the only one capable of protecting him.

The opening of the novel falls, therefore, in the period of Voltaire's *démêlés* with the Regent, whose debauchery was so famous. It is the same association of ideas with Lot, and Sodom and Gomorra, that is at the bottom of the symbolism of *Babouc*. The angel Ituriel sends Babouc to Persépolis to see if there are enough just men in it to warrant its preservation. The idea is taken from the visit of the angels to the two cities of Palestine. Dealing, as Voltaire's novels do, with his enemies in the Republic of Letters, in religion, and in political despotism, no better or rather no more fitting theme could have been chosen by him, in view of the reputation of the Church that he assails, and that of such men as the Regent, Frederick, Desfontaines, Rousseau.

It is probable, then, that Moabdar is the successor of Lot, *i. e.*, Louis XV, the successor of the Regent.

The chief point to be noticed in reference to Moabdar is that his madness and death lead to

a war of succession. This fact, if we keep in mind the timeliness of all Voltaire's work, points to the war of the Austrian succession, of which Voltaire was historiographer. Charles VI was the type of monarch that Voltaire holds up to the condemnation of the world. In his *Ode sur la mort de l'Empereur Charles VI* (M. 8, p. 447), Voltaire compares this *roi des rois* to a cedar whose head defied so long the tempests and whose branches overshadowed so many states; his very name is now effaced, devoured by the grave in which he is buried. If he had conducted his armies in person and by his valor strengthened the Empire, whose glory is expiring beneath the proud Ottoman; if he had been terrible to the Turks, instead of being terrible to his generals, whose death he sought for concluding peace; or if, better still, he had caused the arts to flourish, like the second of the Cæsars, then Voltaire, instead of holding him up as a warning to kings, would, as the herald of truth, have showered upon him the praises of immortal verse, whose light pierces the depths of the night of time.

How could Voltaire associate Charles VI under the same symbol with Louis XV? He

makes many historical rapprochements, such as that of Frederick with Solomon, with the Emperor Frederick III (cf. *Annales de l'Empire,* Beauchot 23, p. 392), and with the Emperor Frederick II. That is but natural. In discussing the sacrament of marriage and the interference of the popes with the bed of kings, he naturally ranges all historical instances of this under one heading. It was but natural, in the war of 1741, that Voltaire should think of the wars of succession in France, two of which he had already treated poetically, one in the *Henriade,* the other in the *Pucelle.* In the canto of the *Pucelle* entitled the *Capilotade,* Voltaire has satirized many of his enemies under names which appear (in editions published in the lifetime of the author) to be those of poets under the reign of Charles VI. His association of ideas seems plain: Charles VI, *le bien-aimé,* is, by virtue of his epithet, Louis XV, *le bien-aimé.* But the Emperor was also Charles VI, therefore he is also Moabdar. When Louis XV fell ill at Metz and dismissed his mistress through the machinations of "un sot" (M. 9, p. 220), some other fool gave him the title of *bien-aimé.* As soon as he became the *bien-aimé* he became,

for Voltaire's symbolism, Charles VI, the mad King of France, and Charles VI, the Emperor, whose death had become the signal for the war of the Austrian Succession.

This symbolism is quite obvious from the eposide of Missouf and Clétofis. As Zadig nears the first village of Egypt he sees a woman in tears, of touching beauty, somewhat like Astarté, being maltreated by a jealous brute. She calls upon Zadig to save her. Zadig remonstrates with the jealous lover, who, accusing him of being one of her favorites, turns upon him with blind and passionate vehemence. Zadig is forced to kill him. Thereupon the capricious lady breaks out in execrations upon him for killing her lover. Zadig is dumbfounded at her conduct. Shortly afterward the emissaries of Moabdar appear and take Missouf for Astarté, in pursuit of whom they had been despatched in all directions. Voltaire is here referring to the fool Fitz-James who caused the dismissal of Mme. de Châteauroux, and who was himself the instrument of Maurepas. The name of the brute, Clétofis, seems to be a hybrid formed from the following elements: *-fis* = *fils* = *fitz* (of *Fitz*-James); *Cléto* = (Para)-

clet, celui qui fait qu'on aime, as Voltaire interprets it in his poem on the Bastille, and is a translated pun on the last component part of the name Fitz-*James.* Clétofis is, therefore, the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of the Clergy, a spirit which Voltaire had attacked often enough, and in consequence of which he was reduced to a position of servitude in his own country.

Missouf is carried to Babylon and has the good fortune to please the King, who makes her his wife. Then she shows the significance of her name: she is *la belle capricieuse,* who gives free rein to all her extravagant fancies. These consist principally in awarding positions of honor to those who are particularly unfit for them. She asked the High Priest, who was old and gouty, to dance before her, and, on his refusal, persecuted him violently. She ordered the Head Groom to make her a tart. It was in vain for him to protest that he was not a pastry-cook; he had to make the tart, and was discharged because it was burned. She gave his charge to the court fool, and the place of Chancellor to a page.

Voltaire had been ambitious to play a rôle at

court. He had found in England men of letters honored with the highest offices in the gift of the crown. The Comte de Maurepas had aided him to win his cause against the Abbé Desfontaines, and the poet counted on the protection of the Minister to get into the French Academy. At the time of the persecutions of Mirepoix Voltaire was designated by the King to visit the court of Frederick on a semi-diplomatic mission. Amelot was Minister of Foreign Affairs at this time, and Voltaire acted under his immediate instructions, although the correspondence passed through the hands of Mme. du Châtelet. It seems that Mme. de Châteauroux was jealous that the negotiations had not passed through her hands, and she caused Amelot to be dismissed. Voltaire had hoped to make his real services to France serve his ambition to get into the French Academy, but the disgrace of Amelot, and the discontent of the King's mistress, together with the enmity of Maurepas, wrecked his hopes. To Maurepas Voltaire had addressed an *Épitre,* now known as the *Épitre à un ministre d'État sur l'Encouragement des arts,* in the hope of enlisting his support, but Maurepas hated even more than Fleury *tout ce*

qui s'élevait au-dessus des hommes ordinaires, says Condorcet, and Voltaire's hints seem to have produced a bad effect on him. On the death of Fleury Maurepas joined Mirepoix, according to Voltaire (*Mémoires pour servir à la vie de Voltaire*), to prevent the poet's election to the place made vacant by the Cardinal's death. He is reported to have said to the poet: *Je vous écraserai.* Now, in the *Épitre* of Voltaire, the patronage of the court is compared to the casting of lots in the household of the Duke of Mazarin for the posts of honor, just about as Missouf distributes them.

> "On compte que l'époux de la célèbre Hortense
> Signala plaisamment sa sainte extravagance:
> Craignant de faire un choix par sa faible raison,
> Il tirait aux trois dés les rangs de sa maison.
> Le sort, d'un postillon, faisait un secrétaire;
> Son cocher étonné devint homme d'affaire;
> Un docteur hibernois, son très-digne aumônier,
> Rendit grâce au destin qui le fit cuisinier."

It was undoubtedly in reminiscence of this vain attempt to arouse in Maurepas a sense of duty towards men of letters and especially towards himself, that Voltaire created the character of Missouf. Her name is probably either

an anagramme for Miss Fou, or it is from the Greek, meaning "She-who-hates-philosophy." Philosophy is the love of truth, therefore Missouf hates the Speaker-of-the-truth, *i. e.*, Zadig and Voltaire. Her resemblance to Astarté is explained in an episode of the *Pucelle* (M. 9, p. 270), where Voltaire describes the two kinds of imagination. Missouf is not the goddess, Venus Urania, who presides over immortal works,

"Mais celle-là qui abjure le bon sens,
Cette étourdie, effarée, insipide,
Que tant d'auteurs approchent de si près,
Qui les inspire," etc.

Her finest favors are showered on novels, new comic operas, on Scudéri, Lemoine, Desmarets, etc. All the characters of the *Pucelle* are in her domain, where a scene similar to that of Missouf takes place:

"Comme ils couraient dans ce vaste pourpris,
L'un se saignant, l'autre tout en larmes,
Ils sont frappés des plus lugubres cris.
Un jeune objet, touchant, rempli de charmes,
Avec frayeur embrassait les genoux
D'un chevalier qui, couvert de ses armes,
L'allait bientôt immoler sous ses coups."

Here everybody is crazy; they are just like the Sorbonne professors: *Ils sont tous fous quand ils sont sur les bancs.* In short, the episode here, as in *Zadig,* deals with the capricious folly of literature, of religion, of politics. This episode has also a pendant in the *Diable antique, nommé l'Inconstance* (=caprice) of the *Guerre civile de Genève* (M. 9, p. 527).

It is possible that the name Missouf may have been influenced by the extravagance of the imagination of the Abbé de Voisenon in his novel *Le Sultan Misapouf et la princesse Grisemine,* and Clétofis by the Don Cléofas of Le Sage's *Diable boiteux.*

One can easily see how Voltaire rounds out his symbolism. Not only is Louis XV, as soon as he becomes *le bien-aimé,* the mad King of France, Charles VI, but, as a mad king, he must necessarily be the lover of Miss Fou, of Folly, of Extravagance, of Wild Imaginings.

It should be noticed that it is really Missouf who causes the war in the novel, and that Voltaire ascribed the part of France in this war to Mme. de Châteauroux, as he ascribed the peace of 1748, and the beginning of European felicity, to Mme. de Pompadour. In each case it is

love, of different natures, but also similar, which produces these two effects.

In the canto of the *Pucelle,* the *Capilotade,* Voltaire compares himself to Charles VII, because the enemies of both were the faction of the *parlementaires,* the Jansenists, the *convulsionnaires* of both epochs. That Voltaire always looked upon these people as his particular enemies is evident from his numerous publications against them. This seems to have been so from the earliest times that we have any knowledge of him. His designation for his elder brother, whom he certainly did not love, is *son janséniste de frère.* He frequently calls them crazy, mad, capable of the crimes of the wretched Séide. He writes to Fleury (M. 36, p. 148; August 22, 1742): "C'est une fatalité pour moi que les seuls hommes qui aient voulu troubler votre heureux ministère soient les seuls qui m'aient persécuté, jusque-là que la cabale des convulsionnaires, c'est-à-dire ce qu'il y a de plus abject dans le rebut du genre humain, a obtenu la suppression injurieuse d'un ouvrage honoré de votre approbation, et représenté devant les premiers magistrats de Paris." Voltaire indicates the application of his satire in

the *Pucelle* to the Jansenists by making Saint Austin (or Augustin) the representative of the *Parlement,* of the friends of the mad King Charles, of the English usurpers, in the council of Heaven. He sings of the God of vengeance, of the exterminating angel, of twenty thousand Jews cut to pieces *pour un veau,* of Joaz killed by Josabad, son of Atrobad, *et Athalie, si méchamment mise à mort par Joad.* Saint Denis, on the other hand, celebrates the God of clemency, of love, and wins the prize. The treatment that Saint Augustin receives is like the treatment to which Itobad is subjected in *Zadig.*

> "Austin rougit, il fuit en tapinois:
> Chacun en rit, le paradis le hue.
> Tel fut hué dans les murs de Paris
> Un pédant sec, à face de Thersite,
> Vil délateur, insolent hypocrite,
> Qui fut payé de haine et de mépris
> Quand il osa, dans ses phrases vulgaires,
> Flétrir les arts et condamner nos frères."

There are some other correspondences between the reign of Charles VI and that of Louis XV to which attention should be called. During the early reign of Charles VI we meet with the

Duke of Orléans whose character is quite similar to that of the Regent. Both are reproached for their debauchery, both are accused of plotting against the reigning house. The question of succession was often raised in both periods. The mad King of Spain, Philip V, plotted to oust the Regent from the throne in the event of the death of Louis XV. During the madness of Charles VI the nation was plunged into the greatest misery. Two dauphins were dead, the third was only thirteen years old. Three parties formed in Paris, about like the three parties in *Zadig,* to dispute the throne. Charles VI formed suspicions of the fidelity of his wife, like those of Moabdar. In one of his lucid intervals he saw the Seigneur Boisbourdon coming out of the apartments of his wife. The King had him seized, put to torture, sewed up in a sack, in the manner of the typical Oriental despot, and thrown into the Seine. He did not attempt to poison the Queen, as Moabdar did; but he had her imprisoned, and it was her imprisonment, like that of Astarté, which led to the most astonishing revolution since the days of Charlemagne (*Essai sur les mœurs,* Beuchot 16, p. 387 ff.). It placed the crown of France

on the head of the English King. Just as Moabdar's madness and the disorders attending it caused the people to believe him smitten of God, so the King of England proclaimed that the afflictions of the French marked the designs of Providence to place the crown on his head (Beuchot 16, p. 402). And if it is not the Queen, Isabelle of Bavaria, who marries the King of England, as Astarté marries Zadig, it is her daughter who brings to him France as a dowry; and who says daughter, in the House of Moab, says wife. Thus it is all one for Voltaire's symbolism whether Marie Thérèse, of Bavaria, is the daughter or the wife of the Emperor Charles VI, just as it is all one in the case of the King Charles VI.

The question at issue in the period of Charles VI, King of France, as in the case of Charles VI, Emperor, is the salic law on the one hand, and the Pragmatic Sanction on the other: the right of inheritance through the female line. The fact that the Dauphine, for whom Voltaire composed the *Princesse de Navarre* and *Sémiramis,* was named Marie-Thérèse, like the daughter of Charles VI, must have aided Vol-

taire's imagination in making himself, under the name of Zadig, her humble adorer.

Aside from the similarity of motives which we find in these two epochs, there is another and not unimportant reason for believing that Voltaire associated these characters under one symbol. The *Épitre dédicatoire* of *Zadig* is meant for the Marquise de Pompadour, who always wished to be considered the Agnes Sorel of her century. She even dressed up as a musketeer and followed the King to Flanders, about as Agnes is represented in the *Pucelle,* donning Jeanne's armor over Chandos' pantaloons. Now, this *Épitre* bears the date of 837 of the Hegira. While Voltaire was not always exact in computing the corresponding dates of the Mohammedan and the Christian eras, he was never far wrong. He is not likely to have chosen this date without a good and sufficient reason. It would fall certainly in the period of the struggle of Charles VII for the throne of his ancestors, and would be, if Voltaire were exact in his computation, approximately the date of the triumphal entry of the King into Paris (1437).

CHAPTER V

ASTARTE

The purpose of the present chapter is to determine the significance of Astarté for Voltaire's symbolism.

By virtue of the equations already made in the case of Moabdar, it is obvious that Astarté is the wife of Louis XV, the wife of Charles VI, King of France, and, as a result of the incest theme, the daughter of Charles VI, Emperor. But what Astarté is for Moabdar does not explain what she is for Voltaire and for Zadig.

Zadig had loved before, as had Voltaire, and neither has any patience with the tender passion.

Zadig's first experience is with the beautiful Sémire, who is carried off by Orcan, or rather, who deserts Zadig when he is sorely wounded by Orcan, and herself yields to the ravisher.

There is a good deal of personal satire in the episode of Sémire and Orcan. In the first place,

Voltaire satirizes the ladies of the court, *les bégueules titrées de la cour,* as he calls them in his letter to Mme. de Bernières (M. 33, p. 125), against whom Paris is inundated with *chansons* (M. 33, p. 89). That is the primary significance of the episode; Zadig suffers such a terrible caprice of a girl brought up at court.

In the second place, Voltaire satirizes the noblemen. Orcan has neither the graces nor the wit of Zadig; he is vain, jealous and envious, persuaded that everything is permitted to him because he is the nephew of a minister.

In the third place, he satirizes the doctors, Molière's old hobby. Hermes could have cured Zadig if his wound had been in the right eye. The personal reference here is to Borelli, who claimed (M. 17, p. 224) that the left eye was much stronger than the right, although there were not wanting skillful physicians who took the part of the right eye against him. When the abscess breaks and heals of itself, Hermes writes a book to prove that Zadig ought not to have recovered. The elements of this satire are to be found in Voltaire's correspondence. At the time when he was trying to recover from his love for the Maréchale de Villars by wrapping

himself in a mantel of philosophy, he wrote to the Marquise de Mimeure for a plaster for *le bouton qui lui est venu sur l'œil.* That is the starting point for the episode of Sémire. Condorcet says that Voltaire always spoke of his love for the beautiful Maréchale with regret, almost with remorse, because it took him from his work. It is her husband who writes to Voltaire to be on his guard against Dr. Vinache (M. 33, p. 65), "quoique ses discours séduisants, l'art de réunir l'influence des sept planètes avec les minéraux et les sept parties nobles du corps, et le besoin de trois ou quatre Javottes, donne de l'admiration." It is also at the house of her sister, in the Château de Maisons, that Voltaire is stricken with small-pox. It was in reference to this malady of his that a long letter to Mme. du Châtelet's father was printed in the *Mercure* of December, 1723 (M. 33, p. 100), in which Voltaire takes the doctors to task. They fail to realize that a man who recovers by taking a certain remedy may have recovered in spite of the remedy, in cases where the vital organs are not affected, since nature is the great restorer. They then treat all cases with the same remedy, failing to realize that every malady

must be as different in different individuals as *les traits de nos visages.*

Zadig is beaten by the satellites of Orcan, and then forsaken by Sémire on account of the danger he is in of becoming blind in one eye. So Voltaire, when he thought of the marks left on his face by his terrible malady, feared the desertion of his fair lady (M. 10, p. 256; M. 32, p. 399):

"Mais, Ciel! quel souvenir vient ici me surprendre!
Cette aimable beauté qui m'a donné sa foi,
Qui m'a juré toujours une amitié si tendre,
Daignera-t-elle encor jeter les yeux sur moi?
* * * * * * *
M'aurait-elle oublié? serait-elle volage?
Que dis-je? malheureux! où vais-je m'engager?
Quand on porte sur le visage
D'un mal si redouté le fatal témoignage,
Est-ce à l'amour qu'il faut songer?"

The poet calls upon the pitiless gods of the underworld not to cut short his days; they are devoted to his love, if she is constant. This trait suggests the interpretation of the name Orcan: he is the god of the under-world, who assailed Voltaire's life, and who took his love, Adrienne Lecouvreur. The personal applica-

tion then becomes obvious. Voltaire had been assaulted by the Chevalier de Rohan-Chabot after having said, it is reported, that "he did not bear as great a name as the Chevalier, but he honored the one he bore." Voltaire may have referred to the meaning of the name of the Chevalier. Chabot means the Orc, *i. e.,* Chabot = Orcan. Whether the marks on Voltaire's face are made by the canes of the "six coupe-jarrets du brave Chevalier de Rohan-Chabot," or by the malady of the god of the under-world is all one for Voltaire's symbolism; it is the devil in either case, Voltaire's first symbol of the author of evil in his novel. Orcan is a court devil, an aristocratic devil, protected by the noble house of Rohan, the head of which, Cardinal Rohan, enjoyed the greatest distinction.

Just what connection Adrienne Lecouvreur had with the episode is not known, but that she was involved in it is evident from the letter of the Président Bouhier (M. 1, p. 304). The name Sémire seems to have been chosen from Sémiramis, the tragedy which Voltaire composed for the Dauphine. Voltaire often refers to actresses by the title rôles of the plays in which they appear. At the time he was com-

posing Sémiramis the Dauphine died, although Voltaire (as in the episode of Sémire), had expected to die himself (M. 36, p. 466). Voltaire seems to have made the equivalence of Orcan, Chabot, Dauphin, which is justifiable liguistically. Thus Sémire became the bride of Orcan in whichever way you take it.

There is no doubt that Voltaire loved Adrienne Lecouvreur, if only on account of her talent. He had to yield to more illustrious rivals, as is evident from a passage in the short story of the *Comte de Boursoufle* (M. 32, p. 447), and from the following verses (M. 32, p. 404):

> *" Recevez dans vos bras mes illustres rivaux:*
> *C'est un mal nécessaire et je vous le pardonne."*

The desperate atrocity to which Voltaire had been subjected by Rohan-Chabot is, if anything, even greater than the malady of the small-pox from which Voltaire suffered. He seems to indicate this in the wording of the episode: " . . . sa douleur le mit au bord du tombeau; il fut longtemps malade, mais enfin la raison l'emporta sur son affliction; et l'atrocité de ce qu'il éprouvait servit même à le consoler." There is certainly no atrocity in being abandoned by one's

mistress, as was Zadig; but there is no greater atrocity than to be assassinated by a cowardly nobleman and abandoned by one's friends, as was Voltaire in this experience. Immediately after it Voltaire wrote to Mme. de Bernières (M. 33, p. 156) that he had been *à l'extrémité,* and was only awaiting his recovery to abandon forever the court. Thus Sémire is a symbol for the caprice of the court, *un si cruel caprice d'une fille élevée à la cour,* as Zadig expresses it.

After this experience Zadig has enough of the court. "Puisque j'ai essuyé un si cruel caprice d'une fille élevée à la cour," he said to himself, "il faut que j'épouse une citoyenne." He picks out Azora, "la plus sage et la mieux née de la ville." She proves, after a few weeks of domestic felicity, that she is quite willing to play the rôle of a second Matron of Ephesus. Cador, Zadig's dear friend, readily persuades her to cut off Zadig's nose in order to cure her new lover of a disorder of the spleen.

Voltaire refers here, I think, to his experience with Mlle. Livry, a young actress who became his mistress, but soon transferred her passion to his dear friend Genonville. Her life is like the adventures of a novel. She had to

leave the Théâtre-Français for some reason, accompanied a troupe of actors to England, and became stranded there. The Marquis de Gouvernet heard about her grace and modesty, offered her his hand in marriage, and was refused because her union with him would be a mésalliance. Voltaire speaks of the fortune which she won from lottery tickets (M. 33, p. 135; Nov., 1724). That was a device of the Marquis to equalize their fortunes. He gave her the tickets and had a false drawing-list printed in which her tickets won a great sum. Voltaire often refers to her passion for his friend, as in the *Pucelle,* and in the following verses (M. 10, p. 245 f.):

> "Toi, dont la délicatesse,
> Par un sentiment fort humain,
> Aima mieux ravir ma maitresse
> Que de la tenir de ma main."

The conduct of his friend Genonville was repeated by two other friends of Voltaire: Thieriot, in the case of Mme. de Bernières, and d'Argental, in the case of Mlle. Lecouvreur. D'Argental even went so far as to wish to make the famous actress his wife. The name Cador

is probably formed from the name d'Argental, on the analogy of Castor; Voltaire calls the brothers d'Argental and Pont-de-Veyle Castor and Pollux. Cador is a "golden" friend, as were also the two brothers d'Argenson, whose name may come under the symbolism. The name Azora is probably taken from the cant of the stage: *appeler azor,* to hiss. Besides being symbolic of Voltaire's relations to Mlle. Livry, the episode embodies Voltaire's ideas of love in the drama. He had no use for the tender passion, as is well known.

The next stage in Voltaire's relations to the fair sex is represented by his *Temple de l'Amitié,* from which all have been driven except him and his *amie.* Friendship is the only passion of the sage, friendship and the love of letters. He writes to Cideville (M. 33, p. 403): "Les belles-lettres sont pour moi ce que les belles sont pour vous, elles sont ma consolation et le soulagement de mes douleurs." It is not love but friendship that retains him at the side of Mme. du Châtelet. Frederick has made fun of him for his attachment to her; he refused to believe that his relations were purely Platonic. Voltaire replies (M. 35, p. 564):

"Un ridicule amour n'embrase point mon âme,
Cythère n'est point mon séjour;
Je n'ai point quitté votre adorable cour
Pour soupirer en sot aux genoux d'une femme."

Voltaire paid a noble tribute to his muse in the verses which he added to his fifth *Discours en vers sur l'homme* (*Sur la nature du plaisir*):

"Quand sur les bords du Mein deux écumeurs barbares,
Des lois des nations violateurs avares,
Deux fripons à brevets, brigands accrédités,
Épuisaient contre moi leurs lâches cruautés,
Le travail occupait ma fermeté tranquille;
Des arts qu'ils ignoraient leur antre fut l'asile.
Ainsi le dieu des bois enflait ses chalumeaux,
Quand le voleur Cacus enlevait ses troupeaux:
Il n'interrompit point sa douce mélodie.
Heureux qui jusqu'au temps du terme de sa vie,
Des beaux-arts amoureux, peut cultiver leurs fruits.
Il brave l'injustice, il calme ses ennuis;
Il pardonne aux humains, il rit de leur délire,
Et de sa main mourante il touche encor sa lyre."

With this idea of his muse as the basis of his symbolism Voltaire can bring in allusions from a half dozen different personages. The Queen of Babylon is now Marie Leczinska, now Marie Thérèse, now Isabelle of Bavaria, now the Pompadour, who was Queen of Love in

very truth, now Mme. du Châtelet, who was Voltaire's divinity and the symbol of his muse, etc. It seems to be part of Voltaire's sly intention to make a sort of Anne of Austria out of the devout Marie Leczinska. A brief résumé of his life as a courtier and his relations to the Pompadour and to his divine Émilie will be necessary to show the realistic basis of the various episodes of the novel.

Voltaire was something of a courtier before his atrocious experience with the Chevalier de Rohan-Chabot. He writes from Fontainebleau (Sept. 17, 1725; M. 33, p. 148) to Mme. de Bernières that he has prepared a little *Divertissement* for the marriage of Marie Leczinska, but he intends to wait until all the fracas is over in order to pay his court to her. He is going to dedicate *Œdipe* to her also (which would enable him to bring her under the incest theme of the house of Moab). A little later he writes (M. 33, p. 151) to Thieriot: "J'ai été ici très-bien reçu de la reine. Elle a pleuré à *Marianne,* elle a ri à *l'Indiscret;* elle me parle souvent; elle m'appelle *mon pauvre Voltaire.*" A fool would be content with that, he adds, but that is only a stepping stone for something more substantial.

In the dedicatory verses which he sent to the Queen with *Marianne* (M. 10, p. 259) he compares her to Pallas Athene, protectrice of the arts (*i. e.,* she is his muse). She has the bearing and the graces of the goddess. Voltaire apologizes for the seeming impropriety of sending to her a tragedy, the theme of which deals with the brutal jealousy of Herod, since she is the delight of the King's heart. Some characteristics of Herod and Marianne may well have found their way into the King and Queen of Babylon. In Voltaire's realistic comedy of the *Envieux* Cléon and Hortense are very similar to Herod and Marianne.

It is well known that Voltaire, who had lived in the "plus grand monde" up to the time of his forced voyage to England, lived thereafter with only a few chosen friends. His life with Mme. du Châtelet at Cirey was one of profound seclusion, troubled only by the machinations of various envious persons, of whom Rousseau and Desfontaines were the chiefs. Cirey was for him the terrestrial paradise, *l'asile des beaux-arts,* as he expressed it in the verses which he had engraved over the portal. Then came the period of his residence at Brussels, his trip to

Berlin in the service of the French ministry of foreign affairs, his assistance to Frederick in the publication of the *Anti-Machiavel.* He is now the satellite of Venus (*i. e.,* of Mme. du Châtelet). Frederick writes him (M. 36, p. 181): "Vous circulez à l'entour de cette planète et suivez le cours que cet astre décrit de Paris à Bruxelles, et de Bruxelles à Cirey."

On the death of Fleury Voltaire entertained well-founded hopes of being elected to his place in the French Academy (M. 36, p. 187): "Le roi m'a donné son agrément pour être de l'Académie en cas qu'on veuille de moi. Je veux qu'on fasse succéder un pauvre diable au premier ministre." That Voltaire counted greatly on getting elected to the vacancy left by Fleury is evident from his letter to d'Argental (M. 36, p. 190), in which he says that his life depends upon it. He had enough "science," but not enough "religion," as he expresses it in the short story of the *Comte de Boursoufle;* Maurepas and Mirepoix, Languet, Archbishop of Sens, and the Cardinal de Rohan, Archbishop of Strasburg, the *griffon,* and the *cheval du roi des rois et la chienne de la reine* prevented his election. Persecuted on all sides (M. 36, p. 195), he wishes at least to have

the public in his favor, *i. e.,* by his numerous dramas which he composed in this period. Such triumphs as those of *Alzire, Zaïre,* and especially *Mérope,* are symbolized in the *Combats* in *Zadig;* it is a joust with all claimants to the laurel crown. His enemies steal from him the reward which was his due, as does Itobad in the novel. Voltaire writes to d'Argental (M. 36, p. 196): "Deux hommes puissants se sont réunis pour m'arracher un agrément frivole, la seule récompense que je demandais après trente années de travail." The ignorant, opulent and rascally *"cheval" de Mirepoix* can not be pacified even by Voltaire's confession of orthodoxy; he is as cruel as he is ambitious and avaricious (M. 36, p. 211): "Le premier bénifice qu'il a eu après la mort du cardinal vaut près de quatre-vingt mille livres de rente; le premier appartement qu'il a eu, à Paris, est celui de la reine, et tout le monde s'attend à voir, au premier jour, sa tête, que votre Majesté appelle si bien une tête d'âne, ornée d'une calotte rouge apportée de Rome." Voltaire consoles himself, however; the Pope may give him a cardinal's hat, but he can not give him a head.

In order to become an *élu* in the French Acad-

emy and in *le saint paradis,* equivalent terms for Voltaire, he dedicates his tragedy of *Mahomet* to the Pope, after having expressed his determination to dedicate it to Frederick; it was all the same thing, after all, as will be seen in the chapter on Arbogad. At the same time, after the forced resignation of Amelot (in 1744), through whom Voltaire had carried on his negotiations with Frederick, and who was succeeded by Voltaire's friend and protector, the Marquis d'Argenson, the poet intrigued at the French court as well as at the court of Rome. He considered himself, in fact, the favorite at three courts: at France, at Rome, and at Berlin. The King is content with him, Mirepoix can not harm him now about the *griffon,* and he is on such excellent terms with His Holiness, that he can say (M. 36, p. 357): "C'est à présent aux dévots à me demander ma protection pour ce monde-ci et pour l'autre." In other words, he is *le ministre,* as in *Zadig.* He is overwhelmed with the *bontées du roi* (M. 36, p. 358; May 3, 1745). He pays assiduous court to the new Queen of Love, Mme. d'Étiolles, *née* Poisson, whom the King had taken from her husband about as the Seigneur Orcan took the

wife of the fisherman in the novel. After the battle of Fontenoy Voltaire actually compares himself to a minister of State (M. 36, p. 366): "La tête me tourne; je ne sais comment faire avec les dames, qui veulent que je loue leurs cousins et leurs greluchons. On me traite comme un ministre; je fais des mécontents."

There appeared at this time a number of attacks on Voltaire in prose and verse (M. 36, p. 372). He is particularly concerned about the rivalry of the poet Roi, *le cheval* Roi, as Voltaire calls him. The Queen protects him, and is not well disposed to Voltaire, who had been paying too much court to the King's mistress, another *chienne de la reine.* The time is past when she called Voltaire *mon pauvre Voltaire,* and showed so markedly her disapproval of the *claque* against *Marianne* in the pre-English period. Voltaire feels that he must pay his court to her, at least indirectly. He uses the good offices of Moncrif, *lecteur de la reine,* whose enmity to Roi was greater than his friendship to Voltaire. Through him Voltaire lets the Queen know (M. 36, p. 374), that the *Temple de la Gloire* and Voltaire's incense is worth more than the *maussaderie* of the *Chevalier*

de Saint-Michel, who has joined his voice to that of the *Abbé de Bicêtre* (*i. e.,* Desfontaines, author of *Avis à M. de Voltaire, sur la sixième édition de sa Bataille de Fontenoy*). The medallions of the Pope, the impression of the *Bataille de Fontenoy* at the Louvre, and other marks of favor which Voltaire has received or is to receive, will be the best reply that Voltaire can make to such men as Desfontaines (M. 36, p. 390).

Then came the final struggle to get into the French Academy. The first reference to it is probably the three lines to Mme. d'Argental (M. 36, p. 410; end of 1745): "Impossible, impossible. Mais il faut absolument que l'autre ange vienne dans mon enfer. Vraiment, j'ai de grandes choses à lui dire." The preliminaries of peace have just been signed at Turin (M. 36, p. 412), so that the historical event, presaging the close of the war, fits into the symbolism of the coming triumphs of Voltaire and of Zadig. The only enemy that he has now is Roi, for he has appeased all court and clerical hostility. Roi has taken on the appearance of virtue to insinuate himself into the good graces of the Queen (M. 36, p. 431): *C'est la seule manière*

de la tromper. Voltaire wishes to dislodge him from this favor by taking on the appearance of orthodoxy; that is the only way to deceive her. Roi is a monster of hell (M. 36, p. 422), *qui prétend qu'on lui a rendu la lyre, et qui fait imprimer le libelle diffamatoire le plus punissable contre l'Académie et contre moi.* The reference is to Roi's libellous *Discours prononcé à la porte de l'Académie française* and the *Triomphe poétique,* a sort of burlesque Odyssey of all Voltaire's trials and tribulations during his long career as a man of letters, including the beatings which he had received. Here is plainly the character of Itobad, who claims to be, not merely the poet Roi, but *roi de Babylone, qui prétend qu'on lui a rendu la lyre, i. e.,* who claims to be the husband of Astarté.

After Voltaire's triumph, his entrance into the Academy *par la grande porte* (*i. e.,* by twenty-eight out of twenty-nine votes cast), he bends every effort to discover the publishers and distributors of the satires of Roi. That leads him back to his old enemy Desfontaines, from whom Louis Travenol had received them. Thus they become the echo of the *Voltairomanie.* By the very nature of these libels, with their

enumeration of all the evils that had befallen Voltaire during his chequered life and their ironical references to his poetic triumphs and his futile attempts to get into the Academy, Voltaire is led, it seems to me, to compose his version of his *Triomphe poétique;* that is, to compose his novel *Zadig.* Here it is not the satirist who presents the facts of his life, but the "Truth-teller," the "Witness-bearer." "le témoin fidèle et authentique." But Voltaire does not compose with the crude art of his rivals; it takes no art, in fact, to compose a libel. But it is the climax of art to give an actual, contemporaneous historical background to his fictions, to make these fictions represent the actual experiences through which he had himself passed, and to raise the whole out of the domain of the personal, the individual, into the realm of the typical, the universal, and all in accordance with a philosophic tendency.

Some features of Voltaire's experiences after his election to the Academy may have found their way into his novel. To put down this upstart, who threatened to eclipse all the court poets, jealous voices and mercenary pens were active as never before. In order to get him

away from the court it was necessary to neutralize the favor of the Pompadour. The old poet Crébillon was put forward as the Sophocles of the century. Finally, towards the end of 1747, Mme. du Châtelet, while playing cards at the Queen's table, lost an enormous sum. Voltaire's inconsiderate remark: *Vous jouez avec des fripons,* caused the poet and his Émilie to make a precipitate retreat from Fontainebleau. Voltaire took refuge with the Duchess of Maine at Sceaux, where he remained in the strictest seclusion, corresponding with Mme. du Châtelet only in a roundabout way, and by special courier, until her appearance one day relieved him of his enforced confinement (cf. Desnoiresterres, *Voltaire à la cour,* p. 137, 139, 141).

Voltaire was often obliged to make sudden and hurried flights, in which he was separated from his divine Émilie, as at the time of the persecution for the *Lettres philosophiques,* and later for the *Mondain,* so that the scene described above could only favor his symbolism in *Zadig.*

It is thought that *Zadig* was composed at Sceaux during Voltaire's confinement there. Desnoiresterres (*op. cit.,* p. 146 f.) shows that

Zadig (or rather *Memnon,* the name under which the novel first appeared) could not have been published before 1748, as he did not leave Sceaux until the last days of December, 1747. If the first edition, that of *Memnon,* is dated 1747, it is not because it was put on sale in that year, but because it was composed in that year and sent, perhaps, to the publishers before the close of the year. It is not unusual for Voltaire to antedate his works in this manner. Longchamps tells a strange story about the publication of *Zadig.* He says that the work was given, in two different sections, to two different publishers, and the printed copies then bound together by Voltaire in order to give the first copies to his friends, before the general public should receive them (cf. Desnoiresterres, *op. cit.,* p. 146 f.). There seems to me to be a basis of truth in this story, to be accounted for by Voltaire's pun on the names. Memnon = *même nom, i. e.,* it is the same as Zadig. The commentators have dismissed the statement of Longchamps, on the ground that the first edition of the work was not called *Zadig,* but *Memnon,* whereas Voltaire's secretary speaks of *Zadig.* When he says then, that *Zadig* was

printed in two different sections, he probably had in mind the version *Memnon* and the version *Zadig,* which, by a pun, probably well known to him at the time but which he had later forgotten, were really the same work.

In this connection it should be said that the little skit *Memnon, ou la Sagesse,* is misdated in all the editions of the novels. Beuchot thinks that it was composed in 1750, but the letter of Stanislas to Voltaire (M. 36, p. 569; Jan. 31, 1749) speaks of *Memnon* and of *Zadig,* and in terms which can not apply to *Zadig* under the title of *Memnon.* Besides, there would be no object in sending to Stanislas at that late date both the old *Memnon* (the first edition of *Zadig*) and the same work, with some additions, under the title of *Zadig.*

The composition of *Zadig* as Sceaux is important to bear in mind. It was the Duchess of Maine who induced Voltaire to treat the same subject as Crébillon *le barbare,* to avenge Cicero for the insults to which the old Tragique subjected him in making him *le Mercure de sa fille.* Voltaire could not forgive Crébillon for two things: first, for his refusal of an approbation to *Mahomet,* and second, his usurpation of the

favor of the Pompadour. That is why, in view of Voltaire's jousts with him in all the subjects which he had treated, *Zadig* is so appropriately dedicated to the *Pompadour,* and it accounts also for the burlesque form of approbation which prefaced the first editions of the novel: "Je soussigné, qui me suis fait passer pour savant, et même pour homme d'esprit, ai lu ce manuscrit, que j'ai trouvé, malgré moi, curieux, amusant, moral, philosophique, digne de plaire à ceux même qui haïssent les romans. Ainsi je l'ai décrié, et j'ai assuré M. le cadi-lesquier que c'est un ouvrage détestable." The *cadi-lesquier* is the commander-in-chief of half of the Turkish empire (there being one for European Turkey and one for Asiatic Turkey). The reference is probably to the *garde des sceaux,* and more particularly to the Chancellor d'Aguesseau (who was *garde des sceaux*), whose severity for *the Éléments de la philosophie de Newton* (M. 1, p. 213) Voltaire could not easily forgive, and whose severity for novels with heretical personages could only arouse Voltaire's scorn and pity.

The link of association between Mme. du Châtelet and Mme. de Pompadour, aside from

Voltaire's relations to both "divinities," is to be found, I think, in a pun. Astarté, as Voltaire tells us in the *Avertissement de Samson,* was *déesse de Syrie;* Mme. du Châtelet was *déesse de Cirey,* and therefore equivalent to the Pompadour. The Syrians worshipped a *poisson;* so did Voltaire, Louis XV, and all the courtiers, for the Pompadour was Mlle. Poisson. Voltaire's enemies, especially the *Envieux,* had attempted to get him into trouble with Mme. du Châtelet, as well as with the Queen and the Pompadour. The relations of the poet to Mme. du Châtelet are symbolized in the comedy of the *Envieux* about as they appear in the novel for Zadig and Astarté. Ariston, who figures Voltaire, is the friend of Hortense, who figures Mme. du Châtelet. Cléon, representing M. du Châtelet, is provincial governor, of a tyrannical and brutally jealous disposition, like Moabdar in *Zadig.* The *Envieux* takes advantage of this situation to arouse in Cléon suspicions like those of Moabdar. Ariston is warned to flee, and is about to be seized, when a fortunate confession of the accomplice of the *Envieux* clears the atmosphere. The publication of the *Mondain,* with its reference to the

terrestrial paradise at Cirey, the dedication of *Alzire* to Mme. du Châtelet, and the aspersions of Desfontaines (who had made similar accusations against Voltaire in reference to Mme. de Bernières), as indeed the mere residence of Voltaire with the amiable Marquise, gave rise to suspicions of a relation quite different from an innocent Platonic friendship.

The situation must not, however, be taken too literally; Voltaire simply wished to give a dramatic presentation of the malignant activity of the *Envieux,* whose attacks did not spare personal honor. The same situation reappears in *Zadig:* it is Itobad who steals Zadig's white armor, and puts his green armor in its place. In his earliest satire, *Le Bourbier,* Voltaire had represented these brigands of the forest of Parnassus throwing mud at the great men of letters, *i. e.,* besmirching their reputation.

Astarté then is primarily Voltaire's muse. His love for her is his love for the *belles-lettres.* He first makes her acquaintance at the time of the Regency. Although she is Queen, she is at the same time the slave of a despot. The desire to possess her favors in full, *i. e.,* the desire for liberty of speech for the man of

letters, brings disaster upon her and her lover: *c'est l'avilissement des beaux-arts et le servitude de l'homme de lettres* of which Voltaire so often complains. The type of literature represented by the inspiration of Missouf takes her place. The folly and madness of war, *droit des brigands que nous nommons héros,* complete her degradation, whether it is caused by the warring of kings or of literary men. But there is no doubt about her final triumph and her union with one of the Immortals, *i. e.,* not merely a member of the French Academy, but an author whose works will live for æons of time.

We meet with precisely the same symbolism in *Candide.* Voltaire sought at Frederick's court the freedom of thought which was refused him in France. The burning of the *Akakia* was enough to cause him to flee that country for ever. Cunégonde is comparable in every respect to Astarté; it is the satire and the personal application that account for any differences in the two characters. When Voltaire arrived on the shores of Lake Leman he would have preferred to live the quiet life of a country gentleman; he did not want Cunégonde any more. He took her only to spite the young baron

Thunder-ten-tronckh. So Voltaire continued his attacks, or rather redoubled them, against the symbol of intolerance, less from love of letters than from hatred of persecution.

CHAPTER VI

ARIMAZE

Arimaze, the Envious, is one of the characters of *Zadig* which shows prima facie evidence that Voltaire had his own life and its experiences as the basis of his novel. There is no epithet in his correspondence with which he is so prodigal; all his enemies are *des envieux et des ingrats.* His comedy of the *Envieux,* his *Ode sur l'Ingratitude,* as well as his *Discours sur l'Envie* (one of the *Discours en vers sur l'homme*), are sufficient evidence of a personal application of the episode of *Zadig* to his envious detractors in general, and to Desfontaines, Rousseau, and Roi in particular.

What is the meaning of the symbol? Arimaze is the Arimane of the Magians, the evil principle, the devil. The devil is represented as a fallen angel, who rebelled against God from envy. Arimaze is described under the traits of the evil one. "Vis-à-vis de sa maison demeurait Arimaze, personnage dont la méchante

âme était peinte sur sa grossière physionomie. Il était rongé de fiel et bouffi d'orgueil, et pour comble, c'était un bel esprit ennuyeux." He is represented as distorting and perverting everything that Zadig does. Besides, Voltaire could not well lay his scene among the ancient Magians without some such character. It afforded him an excellent opportunity to show the parallelism between the Zoroastrian cult and Christianity, and to explain, by the creation of a symbolic character, all such allegories as the good and the evil principle, God and the devil, good angel and bad, etc.

Apart from these considerations Voltaire was persecuted by people whose God was more like our conception of the devil than anything else.

This persecution began after Voltaire's return from England with the publication of the *Lettres philosophiques,* in one of which he attacked Pascal on the subject of the fall of man. Voltaire's attack on the Jansenists is due to his occupation with the philosophy of the English Optimists. Voltaire embraced this philosophy in its great features; he says that Pope's *Essay on Man* is a poetic representation of his *Thoughts on Pascal.* In so

far as this philosophy did not include the fall of man and did not lead people to believe that things were all right for man in a state of society and not only need not but could not be changed, Voltaire embraced it heartily. Let me outline the main features of this philosophy as Voltaire conceived them.

In the first place, it proved that man is as he always has been, a creature subject to death, like every other created thing; for an immortal man, except in a symbolic sense, was a contradiction in terms. It was the height of folly, absurdity and madness to imagine that man was a beautiful creature once, in a place where there was no evil, until he ate an apple, whereupon God kicked him out of paradise. Pascal contended that the Biblical narrative of the fall of man must be true, because it alone explained the astonishing contradictions in man. Voltaire replied that the Androgynes of Plato, the good and evil principle of the Magians, Osiris and Typhon among the Egyptians, Prometheus and Pandora among the Greeks, etc., offered similar explanations. That was no proof of the verity of religion. It was just as foolish to offer these explanations for the evil in the world as it

would be to say of horses, for example, that they were beautiful and good and had no work to do until one of them took it into his head to eat some oats, whereupon all horses were condemned to a life of suffering and torment. If man is necessarily mortal, it is but natural that he should be crushed if a boulder should fall upon him, that he should be killed if the lightning struck him, that he should be drowned if he fell into the water and could not swim and there were no one to aid him. For God, then, there was no *mal physique*. There was physical suffering, to be sure, but that was a different thing, a necessary consequence of man's state-of-being-man, exactly comparable to the physical suffering of all the other animals from the flea to the mammoth.

In the second place, man is endowed, like all the other animals, with needs, and hence with passions. Passion means, etymologically, suffering, because there is no feeling-of-the-lack-of-a-thing without the suffering occasioned by that lack, the absence, of the thing desired. Thus man, without passions, as depicted in the paradisiacal state, is a contradiction in terms, and must always have been

so. Man is endowed of necessity with passions, otherwise he would be not-man, would be an entirely different order of creation. God has given us two fine main-springs of our being: passions to make us act, and reason to control our passions; self-love to enable us to conserve our being and strive for our well-being, and pity, "bienveillance," to keep us from inflicting needless injury on our fellow beings and to incline us to aid them. Thus there is for God no *mal moral;* man could not be made on a better plan. There is moral suffering, to be sure, just as there is physical suffering, but that is an inevitable consequence of man's being-man.

Voltaire's opponents, the Jansenists, with Racine *fils* and Rousseau and his associate Desfontaines at their head, together with the old Bishop of Mirepoix, seemed to consider that Voltaire was the apologist of chance, "le hasard." Voltaire was not, however; the word is senseless, he says (M. 23, p. 177). Certainly, a man who falls into the river because he ventured out on a broken bridge did not fall "by chance," any more than a man who threw himself from the top of a tower would be killed "by

chance." There is no such thing as "chance"; everything is in accordance with eternal laws. The difference between Voltaire's philosophy on the one hand, and that of the Jansenists, and, in general, of the Christians, on the other, is the assigning of motives-of-the-divinity to all that is. The man who aims at the heart of an innocent fellow-being does so, to be sure, in accordance with, because not contrary to, divine laws; but to say with the partisans of absolute fatality, whether among the Jansenists or among the Mohammedans, that it is God who strikes by their hands, who pillages, burns, kills, steals, rapes, through their humble ministry, what is that but worshipping the devil? And Voltaire does not hesitate to speak the word in his *Discours en vers sur l'homme:*

"Les tristes partisans de ce dogme effroyable
Diraient-ils rien de plus s'ils adoraient le diable?"

This exposition belongs more properly under the chapter on the Angel Jesrad, but it is necessary here in order to show why Voltaire embodied his characterization of his persecutors under the symbol of the devil of the ancient Magians.

Now, for Voltaire's enemies, the man who proved the existence of God but denied the fall of man was an atheist; he sapped the foundations of Christianity, for, if there was no fall of man, there was no necessity for redemption, and the mission of Jesus Christ was an imposture born of madness and stupidity. To combat Pascal, with his premise of a man-without-passions, into whose body the devil entered and who goes about the world like a raging lion seeking whom he may devour, was to confess oneself an atheist. To write the *Mondain,* proving that the terrestrial paradise was in the present *siècle de fer* rather than in the fabled *âge d'or,* was to advocate atheism. To say, as did Voltaire, that God could have given the faculty of thought to matter in certain organization, just as matter is organized to have sensations, was to deny the existence of the soul independent of the body, and hence to confess oneself an atheist. For, be it always remembered, the religious fanatics of all times and of all lands, have been blinded by this fallacious belief: If you do not believe in my God, you do not believe in any God.

Now what does Voltaire do in *Zadig?* He gives us, in his own way, the various conceptions

of the devil: he is Orcan, Arimaze, the Prince d'Hyrcanie, Clétofis, Arbogad, Itobad, and finally, the Angel Jesrad. Each devil has his particular characteristics, his particular field of activity, like the characterization by Calmet (M. 17, p. 434), or that of Le Sage, in the *Diable boiteux.* Orcan is the court devil; Arimaze is the devil of Parnassus; the Prince d'Hyrcanie is either the Prince of the Hyrcinian forests, *i. e.,* the Prince of darkness, or he is the north-wind, the typhoon; Clétofis is Asmodeus.

By what association of ideas did Voltaire make Arimaze the devil of the Republic of Letters? It is my theory that he read into the name Arimane the significance of *un âne qui rime,* a poetaster, and that Arimaze is its equivalent, *i. e.,* that *-aze,* from *asinus,* represents *-ane,* for *âne.* My purpose is to show, (1), the readiness of Voltaire to see the connotation of *âne* in any syllable fairly like it, and (2), the same significance for *-aze.* Then I shall show in what way he applied the epithet to Rousseau, Desfontaines, and Roi.

One of the earliest illustrations of the connotation of *âne* in a similar syllable is found in a letter to Thieriot (M. 33, p. 87; early in 1723):

"Je m'en retourne ce soir à la Rivière (*i. e.*, Rivière-Bourdet, residence of Mme. la présidente de Bernières, near Rouen), *pour partager mes soins entre une ânesse et Marianne.*" Voltaire seems to be punning on the final syllable of Marianne.

Boyer signed himself *anc.* (for *ancien*) *évêque de Mirepoix,* which gave Voltaire his *âne de Mirepoix.*

Fréron, author of the *Année littéraire,* is dubbed the *âne littéraire.*

The *Rescrit de l'Empereur de la Chine,* a satire on Jean Jacques Rousseau and Maupertuis, is dated the first day of the month of *Hi Han* (*i. e.*, the bray of the ass, equivalent to April Fool).

The *Extrait de la sacrée congrégation de l'inquisition de Rome* (M. 23, p. 464) is signed: *Coglione-Coglionaccio, cardinal-président. Et plus bas* (these words appear in the signature to indicate the obscene allusion in the names) *Cazzo-Culo, secrétaire du Saint-Office.*

Voltaire's *Lettre de Demad* (M. 24, p. 91), like the *Rescrit de l'Empereur de la Chine,* is dated April 1, but the *Hi Han* of the latter is replaced by *Zastrou.*

The allusions are evidently to the *âne* and *asinus* as a phallic animal. The *Pucelle* is adequate illustration of this. Besides the *âne ailé* of Saint Denis we have the muleteer, metamorphosed into an ass, and serving, (1) to transform the passionateless "virgin" Corisandre into a voluptuous matron, and (2) to minister to the lust of Hermaphrodix in his double quality of man and woman.

That Voltaire should see the connotation of *rimer, rimailler* in Arimaze is not surprising to one who notes his fondness for a pun. Some illustrations of this habit may well be in place here.

The French Resident at Geneva, M. Hennin, was involved in the dissensions of the little Republic. Voltaire refers to the civil war of Geneva as *la guerre d'Hennin, i. e., la guerre des nains.*

Vadé, the name of a writer of short-stories, is one of the names assumed by Voltaire. He puns on it as though it were Latin: *vade retro; vade mecum.* He entitles his work published under that name, from a pun on it: *Fadaises.*

A fellow by the name of Cogé, who, with Riballier, headed the opposition against Marmon-

tel's *Bélisaire,* in which the author dared to assert that the great and noble men of antiquity were not burning in hell, is apostrophized as *Coge pecus:* Collect your flock (*i. e.,* your horde of persecutors, your herd of sheep, asses, swine, etc.).

Fréron is a *frelon.* French *frelon* = English *wasp.* He appears under the latter name in the *Écossaise.*

Morellet, one of the staunch defenders of the philosophical party, is urged on to more vigorous attacks by a pun on his name: *Mords-les!*

Clément, successor of Desfontaines, is not Clément Marot, but Clément *Maraud.*

Omer Joly de Fleury, who assailed the *Encyclopédie* and its authors, is neither *Homère,* nor *joli,* nor *fleuri.* The next step in Voltaire's association of ideas is that he is a thorn without the flower, just as Mirepoix is a *cheval* without a head. He is therefore called *Acanthos: flos espinosa,* a thorny shrub.

The last illustration is similar to the *Akakia.* I have never seen it mentioned that Maupertuis himself gave occasion to Voltaire to form this name. In his *Lettres sur les progrès des sciences,* Maupertuis said that he was willing to

publish these reveries provided the reader took them *sans malice*. He evidently did not know Voltaire. Because Maupertuis had said some foolish things about doctors, Voltaire makes a doctor take up the cudgels for his profession. How appropriate to take the name of a doctor of François I^er^! (*i. e.*, Voltaire's doctor, as François Arouet). But *sans malice* is not the only connotation in the name. The *Akakia* is like the *Acanthos:* it is of the prickly species, from which is extracted something like the *poix résine* by which Maupertuis would arrive at the age of the Biblical patriarchs, or that of the inhabitants of Eldorado. It is also a word like that applied to the philosophers: *Cacouacs,* the "bad" people; *Akakia* is "against bad people," "against badness," a remedy for evil humors, then, by extension, the good doctor who purges Maupertuis of his evil humours, like Diafoirus of the *Malade imaginaire.*

How did Voltaire associate Rousseau, Desfontaines, and the poet Roi under the symbol of Arimaze?

The obvious association is their character as *Envieux,* but there are other reasons. It was Voltaire's uniform practice to get the inspira-

tion for his satire from the writings of his enemies. "I avenged myself on Rousseau by quoting his verses," he says. That he studied the works of Rousseau is evident from a number of references throughout his correspondence and some parallels which I shall point out. Referring to the *Enfant prodigue* he writes to Cideville (M. 34, p. 183 f.): "J'ai fait cet enfant pour répondre à une partie des impertinentes épitres de Rousseau, où cet auteur des *Aïeux chimériques* et des plus mauvaises pièces de théâtre que nous ayons, ose donner des règles sur la comédie. J'ai voulu faire voir à ce docteur flamand que la comédie pouvait très-bien réunir l'intérêt et le plaisant." The *Aïeux chimériques* of Rousseau is based on the association of names by similarity in sound. Galbanon, one of the characters, is explained as *c'est comme qui dirait nom de Galba.* The Comtesse de Critognac traces her ancestry back to a noble Auvergnac, mentioned in Cæsar's Commentaries. The Jew Esdras blossoms out as the noble Adramon. Dorante traces his ancestry back to Dorus, son of Doris and Jupiter, King of the Dorians (*Œuvres de Jean-Baptiste Rousseau, Nouvelle édition,* 1743, Vol. 3, p. 7 ff.).

What more natural than that the "*malin*" Voltaire should trace Rousseau's ancestry back to the devil?

Rousseau defends his comedy against the Abbé d'Olivet (*op. cit.*, p. 361), who had criticised his play on names as contrary to reality. He expresses surprise that the Abbé has not found the original of the Comtesse de Critognac in Paris, as it the most common thing in the world for people to seek their origin in the similarity of names more far-fetched than those of his comedy seem to be. "C'est de quoi M. Le Laboureur, qu'on vient de réimprimer, se plaint en une infinité d'endroits de ses additions, et pour peu qu'on ait lu de livres de généalogies, on y trouvera des originaux d'extravagance plus extraordinaires que tout ce que j'ai pu imaginer dans ma copie. Cela est si vrai que la plus grande partie des bons mots de la pièce que vous avez lue, sont pris de contes que j'ai ouï faire autrefois à la cour, de la feue Maréchale de . . . , de la vieille Marquise de . . . , et d'autres; et si vous en doutez, vous n'avez qu'à mettre votre amie Mad. de Castelnau sur le chapitre de cette première, vous en reconnaîtrez plusieurs, et vous verrez que ce n'est point par le défaut d'originaux que la pièce pèche."

It would seem that Voltaire chose the names of his *Enfant prodigue* in allusion to the characters of Rousseau's comedy. To an audience thoroughly familiar with the *démêlés* of the two authors, *Fierenfat, président de Cognac,* and *Mme. la baronne de Croupillac,* must have recalled the noble *Auvergnac* and *Mme. la comtesse de Critognac.* Voltaire realized the insinuating effect of allusion as did no other author; his satires are inexhaustible in them. In view of his reasons for composing the *Enfant prodigue,* it would seem to me to be very likely that his names are chosen to resemble those of Rousseau's *comédie sifflée.*

Another imitation from Rousseau's works at this time lends color to the foregoing. In an *Epitre to Mlle. Gaussin* (M. 10, p. 512), who played the rôle of Alzire, Voltaire writes:

> " Ce n'est pas moi qu'on applaudit,
> C'est vous qu'on aime et qu'on admire;
> Et vous damnez, charmante Alzire,
> Tous ceux que Guzman convertit."

It is significant for Voltaire's occupation with Rousseau's works at this time (the date of the *Épitre* is 1736), that these verses are imitated

from Rousseau's "Vers envoyés à une Demoiselle le jour de St. Denis sa fête" (*Œuvres de Rousseau, op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 220):

> "Vous eussiez fait donner aux Diables
> Tous ceux qu'il fit donner à Dieu."

It was Rousseau himself who gave Voltaire the idea of associating him with the devil. In his allegory *L'Opéra de Naples* Rousseau had represented a hypocritical devil as theater poet, driving away all lovers of the drama. It must have seemed to Voltaire that Rousseau had painted himself, the author of several *comédies sifflées.* I think that Voltaire's scathing satire on Rousseau, the *Crépinade,* is the result of this comparison, and an imitation of the *Opéra de Naples.* Rousseau represents the Lord as dissatisfied with the attraction of the opera in Naples, as it took the people from his worship. He resolved to make use of the devil to put a stop to it. He puts the devil into the body of an Abbé and sends him to Manchine, the director of the Opera. He is engaged as theater poet, and his bad versification soon drives away all the habitués. Voltaire uses the same idea: he is formed by the devil, possessed by his spirit,

and commanded to *rimailler,* just as Rousseau's devil is commanded to *versifier.*

It will not be necessary for me to go deeply into the relations of Voltaire and Rousseau. I need only point out the references to him which prove him to be for Voltaire a diabolical poetaster, *i. e.,* (1) a devil, (2) an ass, and (3) a rhymester.

Voltaire's earliest reference to Rousseau (M. 33, p. 46; 1716) emphasizes the fact that he is possessed of the devil and that his arguments are false: "Ce qui m'indigne, c'est le mauvais cœur qui perce à chaque ligne . . . je crois y voir plutôt un enragé qu'un poète. Il n'est pas inspiré, il est possédé . . . teint de la bile qui le dévore . . . Son épitre à Marot . . . roule sur un raisonnement faux. Il veut prouver que tout homme d'esprit est honnête homme et que tout sot est fripon."

As early as 1723 (M. 33, p. 85) Voltaire referred to him as the devil *qui se fait ermite.*

Voltaire composed a life of Rousseau in which he is represented as having denied his father. Then the devil takes possession of him.

> "Aussitôt entra dans son corps
> Le diable nommé Couplegor;

Son poil devint roux, son œil louche.
Il lui mit de travers la bouche;
Et de sa bouche de travers
Sortaient des crapauds et des vers."

Voltaire emphasizes the fact that Rousseau is devoid of logic. The real poet sketches his works first (M. 18, p. 554); *la raison alors tient le crayon.* Afterwards the Imagination is free to move within the limits prescribed by reason. Rousseau did not do that; he gave himself up to *l'ampoulé, le gigantesque, le galimatias. Dans tous ses ouvrages raisonnés, il n'y a nulle raison . . . il prouve toujours mal ce qu'il veut prouver* (M. 33, p. 279). Rousseau himself gave Voltaire reasons, apart from the quality of his logic, for this charge. In the last of his epigrammes Rousseau says that "Phœbus had not endowed him with great knowledge but he knows how to touch the lyre." There are scores of references to Rousseau as *rimailleur, versificateur, rimeur.* Even his lyric gift is now taken from his (M. 8, p. 586):

"Il [*i. e.*, Apollo] t'ôte le peu de génie
Dont tu dis qu'il t'avais fait don:
Il te prive de l'harmonie;
Et tu n'as plus rien aujourd'hui

Que la fureur et la manie
De rimer encore malgré lui
Des vers tudesques qu'il renie."

Rousseau is simply *un rimeur* (M. 34, p. 128); *ce rimeur atrabiliaire* (M. 34, p. 152); *ce vieux rimeur couvert d'ignominie* (M. 34, p. 131); *rimeur satirique, peu d'esprit"* in phrases pillaged from Marot and Rabelais (M. 9, p. 395); *vétéran rimailleur . . . quitte la rime, Apollon te révoque: il t'aima peintre, et te hait barbouilleur* (M. 32, p. 411); "The God that rhymes is the only God that loves him" (M. 8, p. 585); *il ne sait que rimer* (M. 8, p. 566); "Even Lamotte surpasses him in wit and reason" (M. 8, p. 565); "Apollon lui ôte le talent de la poésie, comme on dégrade un prêtre avant de le livrer au bras seculier. C'est un scélérat qui avait le vernis de l'esprit: le vernis s'en est allé et le coquin demeure" (M. 34, p. 214), etc.

Voltaire makes Rousseau and Desfontaines associates. Rousseau is the *Desfontaines des poètes;* whenever you see bad prose against Voltaire, it is by Desfontaines; bad verse, by Rousseau. Both are considered not merely Voltaire's enemies, but the enemies of the human race (M. 36, p. 187), the enemies of all nations (M. 34,

p. 205). Voltaire says that he has spoiled his *Ode sur l'Ingratitude* by leaving out the name of his enemy (M. 34, p. 124): *Je peignais l'enfer, et j'oubliais Asmodée.* In the short fragment of a letter that has come down to us, addressed to Mme. du Châtelet, Rousseau, as the devil, receives a peculiar sacrifice from the poet (M. 34, p. 193), through his *chaise percée.* He has been kicked out of his terrestrial paradise by the devil, a common figure with him.

Arimaze wished to ruin Zadig, because the latter was happy. Voltaire writes to the Abbé d'Olivet (M. 34, p. 123) that Rousseau can not hinder Voltaire's works from being good and famous, and that he is the happiest person in the world, *par ma fortune, par ma situation, et par mes amis.* This thought is repeated in a letter to Frederick, whose friendship for the poet was another cause of envy (M. 34, p. 582): Voltaire is completely happy; he has money, love, friendship, and his little paradise is perfect.

The enmity of Arimaze is due largely to his inability to get into good society; nobody cares for his company; his presence corrupts the joy of the guests, as the harpies corrupt the meats.

"Un autre jour, causant avec lui dans le palais, ils abordèrent un ministre qui pria Zadig à souper, et ne pria point Arimaze. Les plus implacables haines n'ont pas souvent des fondements plus important." Voltaire made this charge of being social outcasts, and therefore envious of Voltaire, against both Rousseau and Desfontaines. Desfontaines can no more get into good society in Paris (M. 35, p. 334), than Rousseau in Brussels. *Rousseau a été retranché de la société depuis longtemps* (M. 34, p. 128). Desfontaines is a *bouc gros et gras,* who will never be invited to dinner (M. 36, p. 319):

"Jamais Églé, jamais Sylvie,
Jamais Lise à souper ne prie
Un pédant à citations.
Sans goût, sans grâce, et sans génie
Sa personne, en tous lieux honnie,
Est réduite à ses noirs gitons.
Hélas! les indigestions
Sont pour la bonne compagnie."

We have similar scenes in Voltaire's comedy of the *Envieux.* The *Envieux* is a composite portrait of Desfontaines and Rousseau. A laquais appears with a message. "For me?" says the *Envieux.* The laquais replies:

"Non pas, c'est pour Ariston, votre ami.
Le duc d'Elbourg l'attend à quelques pas d'ici.
On doit souper ce soir chez madame Tullie,
Qui nous donne le bal avec la comédie."

The *Envieux* is not invited, and plots to ruin Ariston-Voltaire, just as the *Envieux* of *Zadig* plots to ruin the hero. Rousseau had accused Voltaire of having calumniated him to the Duc d'Aremberg, who is, I think, figured here under the name of Elbourg.

The type of causes of the hatred of Arimaze, insignificant as they are, is well illustrated by Voltaire's version of the enmity between him and Rousseau. This enmity began at the time of Voltaire's visit to Brussels with Mme. de Rupelmonde. Voltaire read to Rousseau his *Épitre à Julie* (later known as the *Épitre à Uranie,* and finally as *Le Pour et le Contre*). The old satirist, formerly a vile debauchee, pretended to be indignant at Voltaire's abuse of his *sainte religion.* Rousseau read to Voltaire his *Ode à la postérité,* and Voltaire said that "his letter would not reach its address."

The enmity of Rousseau and Desfontaines culminated in the libel of the latter, known as the *Voltairomanie.* Voltaire never forgot this

persecution. In his satire *Le Russe à Paris* (M. 10, p. 129 f.), the Russian is made to ask whether there is no great genius among the Parisians. Voltaire replies that if there were one his life would not be safe.

> "Le fripon le plus vil, le plus déshonoré,
> Dans la basse débauche obscurément vautré,
> S'il a du bel esprit la jalouse manie,
> Intrigue, parle, écrit, dénonce, calomnie,
> En crimes odieux travestit les vertus."

That is the exact portrait of the Arimaze of the novel *Zadig*.

Arimaze truncates verses of Zadig, a charge which Voltaire repeatedly makes against Desfontaines. That sort of literary brigandage began with Desfontaines' edition of the *Henriade* (M. 25, p. 584).

The only incident that seems at all foreign to my interpretation of Arimaze is the episode of the wife of the rhymster. She is the occasion of the disgrace and flight of the hero, because he does not respond to her advances. Voltaire probably had in mind the poet Roi, his competitor for a place among the Immortals. Voltaire treats him horribly in the following epigramme (M. 10, p. 530 f.; about 1744):

"Connaissez-vous certain rimeur obscur,
Sec et guindé, souvent froid, toujours dur,
Ayant la rage et non l'art de médire,
Qui ne peut plaire, et peut encor moins nuire;
Par ses méfaits dans la geôle encagé,
A Saint-Lazare après ce fustigé,
Chassé, battu, détesté pour ses crimes,
Honni, berné, conspué pour ses rimes,
Cocu, content, parlant toujours de soi?
Chacun s'écrie: Eh! c'est le poète Roi."

The point to be noticed here is that Roi was *cocu*. Desnoiresterres says of him (*Voltaire à la cour*, p. 61, and note): "Il passait pour avoir vendu sa femme à un financier du nom de Le Riche, ou du moins pour souffrir qu'elle fut ostensiblement entretenue par ce parvenu du Système."

A final parallel is offered by the criticism of Zadig's style by Arimaze and his wife, to which attention has already been called in the chapter on Voltaire's Symbolism. Both Roi and Desfontaines took the author of the *Bataille de Fontenoy* to task for the omission of brilliant figures of speech, drawn from antiquity. While the passage in *Zadig* is aimed chiefly at the style of the Bible, its basis is none the less in the criticism of the *Envieux*.

CHAPTER VII

ARBOGAD

What is the significance of the name and the episode of Arbogad? *Gad,* in Hebrew, means God and also robber. How can God be a robber? How can a robber be God? And what has *Arbo-* to do with the name? How can a robber be the God of the trees, or God be the robber of the trees? And why does not the God-robber, or the robber-God, live among the trees of which he is the robber or the God, or both, instead of living on the confines of Syria and *Arabie Pétrée?*

It is not possible that Voltaire is composing here without a purpose; there is too much method in his madness: the episode is too clear cut, too natural, too well-wrought, and, in addition, it bears too strong a resemblance to other variations on the theme of brigandage in Voltaire's works, as Martinguerre in the *Pucelle,* Vanderdendur and Thunder-ten-tronckh in *Candide,* and the brigandage of literature

throughout the poet's correspondence. The episode should not be dismissed offhand as one of Voltaire's caprices; on the contrary, it deserves to be investigated with the utmost care. Let us, therefore, consider the episode as the author gives it.

This is the episode (M. 21, p. 71 ff.): "En arrivant aux frontières qui séparent l'Arabie Pétrée de la Syrie, comme il passait près d'un château assez fort, des Arabes armés en sortirent. Il se vit entouré; on lui criait: 'Tout ce que vous avez nous appartient, et votre personne appartient à notre maître.' Zadig, pour réponse, tira son épée; son valet, qui avait du courage, en fit autant. Ils renversèrent morts les premiers Arabes qui mirent la main sur eux; le nombre redoubla: ils ne s'étonnèrent point, et résolurent de périr en combattant. On voyait deux hommes se défendre contre une multitude; un tel combat ne pouvait durer longtemps. Le maître du château, nommé Arbogad, ayant vu d'une fenêtre les prodiges de valeur que faisait Zadig, conçut de l'estime pour lui. Il descendit en hâte, et vint lui-même écarter ses gens, et déliverer les deux voyageurs. 'Tout ce qui passe sur mes terres est à moi, dit-il, aussi bien

que ce que je trouve sur les terres des autres; mais vous me paraissez un si brave homme que je vous exempte de la loi commune.' Il le fit entrer son château, ordonnant à ses gens de le bien traiter; et, le soir, Arbogad voulut souper avec Zadig.

"Le seigneur du château était un de ces Arabes qu'on appelle *voleurs;* mais il faisait quelquefois de bonnes actions parmi une foule de mauvaises; il volait avec une rapacité furieuse, et donnait libéralement: intrépide dans l'action, assez doux dans le commerce, débauché à table, gai dans la débauche, et surtout plein de franchise. Zadig lui plut beaucoup; sa conversation, qui s'anima, fit durer le repas; enfin Arbogad lui dit: 'Je vous conseille de vous enrôler sous moi, vous ne sauriez mieux faire; ce métier-ci n'est pas mauvais; vous pourrez un jour devenir ce que je suis.'

"—Puis-je vous demander, dit Zadig, depuis quel temps vous exercez cette noble profession?

"—Dès ma plus tendre jeunesse, reprit le seigneur. J'étais valet d'un Arabe assez habile; ma situation m'était insupportable. J'étais au désespoir de voir que, dans toute la terre

qui appartient également aux hommes, la destinée ne m'eût pas réservé ma portion. Je confiai mes peines à un vieil Arabe, qui me dit: 'Mon fils, ne désespérez pas; il y avait autrefois un grain de sable qui se lamentait d'être un atome ignoré dans les déserts; au bout de quelques années il devint diamant, et il est à présent le plus bel ornement de la couronne du roi des Indes.' Ce discours me fit impression; j'étais le grain de sable, je résolus de devenir diamant. Je commençai par voler deux chevaux; je m'associai des camarades; je me mis en état de voler de petites caravanes: ainsi je fis cesser peu à peu la disproportion qui était d'abord entre les hommes et moi. J'eus ma part aux biens de ce monde, et je fus même dédommagé avec usure: on me considéra beaucoup: je devins seigneur brigand; j'acquis ce château par voie de fait. Le satrape de Syrie voulut m'en déposséder; mais j'étais déjà trop riche pour avoir rien à craindre; je donnai de l'argent au satrape, moyennant quoi je conservai ce château, et j'agrandis mes domaines; il me nomma même trésorier des tributs que l'Arabie Pétrée payait au roi des rois. Je fis ma charge de receveur, et point du tout celle de payeur."

Arbogad also informs Zadig that the times are especially good for plundering, now that Moabdar is dead. Everything is in confusion in Babylon. He does not know, and does not care, what has become of Astarté; she may have passed through his hands. He seized everything that he could, but he did not keep it, he sold it to the highest bidder. He has heard, however, of the incursions of the Prince d'Hyrcanie, perhaps she is among his concubines. While talking he drank with so much courage that his ideas became confused. He kept repeating that he was the happiest of men, and urged Zadig not to worry any more about the fate of Astarté. Finally, gradually made drowsy by the fumes of the wine, he went to bed and slept tranquilly all night. Zadig, however, passed the night in the greatest agitation, continually contrasting the fate of his Astarté with that of the robber Arbogad. The next morning he inquired of all the inhabitants of the château if they knew anything of Astarté, but they were too busy to pay any attention to him. They had taken new booty during the night, and the most that he could obtain from them was the permission to depart. He availed

himself of this permission without delay, and started on his way to Babylon.

The question that confronts us now is, what did Voltaire mean by this episode? It is obvious that we must determine from his works to whom he most consistently gives the epithet of *voleur,* and be guided by an analysis of the episode itself in our interpretation of it.

To me the salient points in this episode are the following:

First: Arbogad's motto is: *Cette terre est à moi.* He is the absolute lord of it; he is the *Seigneur.*

Second: Arbogad has no right to his lands except that of brigandage; the right of might or ruse.

Third: Arbogad owes his elevation *in ultimo* to an apologue, the grain of sand which became diamond. The ultimate source of all his actions is the envy which the grain of sand bears toward the diamond.

Fourth: Arbogad was not only lord of his own lands, but was the *fermier-général* of others; he is *receveur* but not *payeur* of the tribute of *Arabie Pétrée.*

Fifth: Arbogad's portrait: he has some good

qualities among a host of evil ones. He honors valor; he comes to the aid of Zadig against his own troops. Although he robbed with furious rapacity, he gave liberally. He was intrepid in battle, rather pleasant in social intercourse; debauched at table, but gay in his debauche; a wine-bibber and great eater, lingering long at dinner; good *raconteur,* remarkable for his frankness, and always eager to enroll new recruits.

Now it seems to me that the key to Voltaire's symbolism in this episode is Arbogad's motto: *Cette terre est à moi.* Let us consider this symbolism, with all its probable ramifications.

In the first place, who is entitled to say: "Cette terre est à moi seul; tout ce qui vient sur mes terres est à moi; tout ce que vous avez m'appartient; votre personne m'appartient?" Clearly, for Voltaire, there can be but one interpretation, *in ultimo,* of the symbol: it is the symbol of the *Infâme,* the symbol of Intolerance, *le vil tyran de l'esprit.* Where did he meet this symbol? Everywhere: in religion, in politics, in literature; it was the spirit of the 18th century. But keeping to the literal significance of the motto: *Cette terre est à moi,*

who was entitled to raise that cry, or who arrogated to himself that right? Clearly there were only three classes of persons who could repeat Arbogad's motto, namely, (1), the gods, (2), their vicars on earth, especially the kings and the popes, and (3), the vicars of the vicars of the gods, *les serviteurs des serviteurs de Dieu,* and of the kings; in short, whoever speaks in their name and with their authority. These terms are mutually equivalent, for the title of the popes is *le serviteur des serviteurs de Dieu;* the popes are kings of the earth; the popes are gods on earth, as are also the kings; every ecclesiastical prince, as also every nobleman, is king of his own territory; even the *fermiers-généraux* are called plebeian kings in *Babouc.*

There is danger of equivocation here, unless we define our terms. I am not concerned with any philosophical or metaphysical discussion of the divinity that shapes our ends, or of the God of any sect; I am concerned solely with the idea of God and of his vicars on earth that pervades all Voltaire's works. To him the God of the Christians was a monster of intolerance, by virtue of his cry; "I am thy God and thou shalt have no other God but me." Cf. M. 17, p. 476,

577, 581. Voltaire says also (*Essai sur les mœurs,* Beuchot 18, pp. 144–145) that Christianity has produced only crimes and assassinations by its intolerance: *quiconque ne pense pas comme nous est réprouvé, et il faut avoir les réprouvés en horreur.* If Voltaire had been convinced that God had revealed himself to the wretched Jews, and that their God was really the Creator of the universe, his attitude would have been different. But he looked upon their God as a man after David's own heart: a remorseless brigand, a debauchee, passionate even to bestiality, rapacious as Joseph, their first *fermier-général,* and the type of the Jews of all times, reducing man body and soul to a state of abject slavery. Wherever we find in Voltaire a symbol of tyranny, of exclusive domination, of intolerance in short, we will find inevitably at the bottom of it the God of the Garden, insatiable of our misfortunes in this world and in the next. It is impossible not to recognize him in Arbogad and his motto. "You are mine, body and soul, and all that you have is mine; believe in me, enroll yourself under me, spread my gospel with fire and sword, and you will be saved; otherwise you will be damned in this

life and the next and burn forever in hell-fire." It is impossible not to recognize him in the name of the Westphalian Baron Thunder-ten-tronckh, the thunderer among the trees of the garden, who, whether Senior or Junior, whether of the Old Testament or of the New, wants everything for himself, especially whatever is dearest to man: liberty, life, happiness, wealth, etc. He appears in Voltaire's works in a score of forms, like the old Proteus of the Greeks, but he can always be held fast by the trail of his rapacious tyranny.

Of course there is a sense in which one can say of God that everything is his, to give and to take away as he pleases. There is a sense in which every man can say with Job: "The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." That is an eternal verity which nobody will contest, in a certain sense. But certainly the Creator of the universe has not given to any one of our fellow-beings the right to speak in his name, to rob in his name, to burn, to rape, and slay in his name and for his greater glory, the right to cry (M. 9, p. 388):

" Ce n'est pas moi, c'est lui qui manque à ma parole,
Qui frappe par mes mains, pille, brûle, viole."

Could the partisans of such a frightful dogma, Voltaire asks, say more, if they worshipped the devil?

To Voltaire the origin of evil in the world was to be traced, not to man's passions as such, but to the fact that they became justified, in the course of time, through the misuse of the name of the Deity. What will the people not endure from the tyranny of a king, if they are persuaded that he is the Lord's anointed, that he rules by divine right, that he, like the pope, can do no wrong? Efface such a conception: let the people see that the Deity has nothing to do with the manner in which man conducts himself, that his reason has been given him to serve as his criterion as to what is best for him, and tyranny, and persecution in the name of God will cease utterly. To all legislators who spoke to the people in the name of the Deity, Voltaire would speak thus (*Essai sur les Mœurs,* Beuchot 15, p. 243): " Arrête, ne compromets pas ainsi la Divinité; tu veux me tromper si tu la fais descendre pour enseigner ce que nous savons

tous; tu veux sans doute la faire servir à quelque autre usage; tu veux te prévaloir de mon consentement à des vérités éternelles pour arracher de moi mon consentement à ton usurpation. Je te défère au peuple comme un tyran qui blasphème."

The example of Arbogad's motto: *Cette terre est à moi,* which will be most readily recalled, is that of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: "All that land I give unto thee and thy descendants forever." The oracles of the Jews promised them not only the land of Canaan, flowing with milk and honey, but the dominion of the earth; they, whose number was as small and insignificant as a few scattered grains of sand, were to be as the grains of sand of the desert: uncounted millions; the whole world was to be blessed in the seed of Abraham. These oracles they took in a literal sense (*Essai sur les mœurs,* Beuchot 15, p. 138), but the Christians interpreted them in a figurative sense. The Jews, enriched in Egypt by farming the revenues, their favorite occupation ever since, robbed the Egyptians of their golden vessels, were led into the deserts by their Arbogad, where they languished for forty years, and

finally took possession of a little kingdom by the most odious rapacities in history.[1] They told the Moabites that their God had given them this land, just as the God of the Moabites had given them their land. The God of the Jews was so thoroughly a tribal God that he could conquer on the mountains, but not in the valleys. So the God of every little nation was thoroughly a tribal God, made in the image of the brigand who first used the name of the deity to justify his usurpation. The literal meaning of the name of the Egyptian deity Osiris, Voltaire tells us (M. 18, p. 358), is the motto of Arbogad: *Cette terre est à moi.* In every war in historical times, and even the wars of which mythology tells us, the tribal gods fought at the head of the tribes to determine the question: *A qui est cette terre?* They were all made in man's own image, but with his passions infinitely magnified: infinitely jealous, envious, avaricious, brutal, etc. One can easily see in what a variety of forms Voltaire can present such a conception of the divinity. He is Sacro-

[1] It may not be out of place to *emphasize* the fact that this interpretation of the Jews and their God is Voltaire's; I merely reproduce it.

gorgon in the *Pucelle:* the grand inquisitor whose Medusa head turns men's hearts to stone. He is Martinguerre in the same poem, *voleur de jour, voleur de nuit, mais saintement à la vièrge attaché,* who, in times of confusion seizes everything that he can lay his hands on, and whose head is cut off by an intrepid Englishwoman: symbolic of England's deliverance from the papacy in the war started by Martin Luther. He appears in Vanderdendur, the lover of riches and the perpetrator of inhuman cruelties to secure them. He is particularly the lover of virgins; witness Voltaire's *Pucelle* and the origin of Christianity. The Jews were commanded by their Arbogad to kill every living thing, except *des jeunes filles nubiles.* He is the lover of old women who have fallen once or more times; he takes them unto himself, and incidentally their wealth also. As the God who spoke to Moses face to face but still showed himself only *par derrière,* he is Hermaphrodix, Conculix, Cacambo, like Diafoirus, *qui n'est pas accoutumé à parler aux visages.* He is the God of incest, since he is the father of himself by his mother, as in Voltaire's first symbolic work, *Œdipe.* As the phallic God, what is his

symbol? The winged ass of the *Pucelle,* whose favors he finally gets.

For Voltaire the three impostors, Moses, Jesus Christ, and Mohammed, all followed identical plans: those of Arbogad. They all raised his cry: *Cette terre est à moi.* "The earth is mine and the fullness thereof." Voltaire says (M. 25, p. 131): "Christianity was established by imposture and madness. An impostor harangues the dregs of society in a barn, and the impostors who succeed him soon inhabit palaces." Yet Moses, Jesus Christ, and Mohammed, came after the earth had been apportioned; the lots had been cast; everybody was in peaceful possession of his own. But the dregs of society ran eagerly after an ambitious impostor who told them that he had come to save them, and that theirs should be the dominion of the earth. Cf. especially *Idées républicaines,* M. 24, p. 414, where the parallel between Arbogad and the robber-God of the Christians is very clear. He aroused their envy and their cupidity. The impostors of the new sect of Christianity used the oracles of the Jews about the sands of the desert to designate the world dominion of the new sect (M. 18, p. 427

f.). Peter is the grain of sand, or the stone, of the desert, which became diamond. It was no use to tell the choleric Gregory VII, Pope Hildebrand, or, as the Germans call him, Pope *Höllenbrand,* that it was only a question of the celestial empire. *Maudit damné,* he cried, *il s'agit du terrestre, et il vous damnait, et il vous faisait pendre s'il pouvait.* More profound minds, Voltaire adds, went further in their demonstrations: if Jesus had renounced the kingdom of the earth, it must all the more belong to his vicar the Pope. Who had a better claim to what the master cast off than the loyal servant of that master? So the papal Arbogad claimed the dominion of the whole world. There was not a single usurpation since the time of Gregory that did not get its authorization from the vicar of Christ (*Essai sur les Mœurs,* Beuchot 16, p. 260). And the deposed king was expected to say: "The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." The Lord was Arbogad. Even the new kingdoms, discovered and conquered by horrible atrocities, in the New World, were parceled out by Arbogad, who stole with such furious rapacity and gave so liberally.

In what way is Arbogad the symbol of the kings of Europe? By divine right; they are the Lord's anointed. *Christ* means *anointed;* therefore every king is a Christ, an Arbogad. In what respect is a king a robber? Every first king is a robber, a brigand, *voleur de grand chemin,* as Voltaire says in a score of places (cf. *Annales de l'Empire,* Beuchot 23, p. 93; and *Essai sur les Mœurs,* Beuchot 17, p. 447). In the second place, the kings with whom Voltaire came into contact, especially Louis XV and Frederick, were despots, were like any *voleur de grand chemin.* "A prince who, without justice, and without the formality of established laws, imprisons or puts away a citizen, is a highwayman, whom we call Your Majesty" (M. 23, p. 530). Voltaire had gone almost as far as that in his *English Letters* (M. 22, p. 103 f.): "The English are the only nation of the earth that has succeeded in limiting the power of the king by law, and leaving him all liberty to do good, has tied his hands to do evil. Other nations have shed as much blood as the English in the cause of liberty, but it has only served to cement their bondage." It is plain, therefore, that Arbogad, *qui faisait quelquefois*

de bonnes actions parmi une foule de mauvaises, is every king of Europe, and of the world, except the English king.

Kings and popes have their subordinate brigands. Every ecclesiastical prince of Germany was an Arbogad; every religious order, exempt from taxation, had as its head an Arbogad, devoured with the rage of amassing wealth. Every *fermier-général,* to whom a portion of the kingdom was given *pour le travailler en finance,* as Voltaire calls it (M. 10, p. 57), was an Arbogad, who robbed and ravaged in the name of his master. The Arbogad of *Zadig* says that he was appointed receiver of the tribute which *Arabie Pétrée* paid to the King of Kings. The King of Kings was, in one sense, the Pope. The ecclesiastical princes and the religious orders, especially those of Germany, collected Peter's pence, *i. e.,* the tribute of *Arabie Pétrée,* but did not always turn it into the coffers of the King of Kings. It was this tribute, Voltaire says, which turned Germany, Holland, and England away from the Holy Roman Catholic Church. In another sense the King of France was the King of Kings. The kings of whom he was the king are called by Vol-

taire in *Babouc* (M. 21, p. 7) "forty plebeyan kings." One could quote a score of passages from Voltaire's works where he has raised his voice against the *traitants,* who laid waste the kingdom and kept nine-tenths of their ill-gotten gains. Babouc concluded from the shameless traffic in the dignities of the empire and from the depredations of the plebeyan kings, that the Angel Ituriel would not have to destroy Persepolis, for the inhabitants would exterminate themselves by their evil internal administration. Thus every little roitelet of the *fermiers-généraux* was entitled to raise the cry of Arbogad: *Cette terre est à moi et tout ce que vous avez m'appartient de droit divin.*

Voltaire had just had an unpleasant experience with one of them, whose name, Michel, as that of the messenger and agent of the Biblical Arbogad, fitted most happily into his symbolism. "Un certain Michel, à qui j'avais confié une partie de ma fortune, s'est avisé de faire la plus horrible banqueroute que mortel financier puisse faire. C'était un receveur général des finances de Sa Majesté. Or je ne conçois que médiocrement comment un receveur général des finances peut faire banqueroute sans être un

fripon" (Letter to Cideville from Brussels, Oct. 28, 1741; M. 36, p. 104). Voltaire had already written to Thieriot (M. 36, p. 102) that Michel had taken 32500 livres, "soit en rentes, soit en argent comptant; mais je le crois plus à plaindre que moi," he adds. "Il vivait splendidement du bien d'autrui, et il sera réduit à ne le dépenser qu'à la sourdine." He consoles himself with the words of Job, adding that one can submit to Providence without being *dévot* (M. 35, p. 481). He ends the episode with the pious wish that the devil may get Michel (Letter to Mme. Denis, Sept. 9, 1752); and that is where all his symbolism ends: in the equivalence of God and the devil.

The question as to the identity of Arbogad is not yet answered, however. There are several other applications which show how far-reaching Voltaire's symbolism was. Voltaire was met on every hand by the symbol of Arbogad: *Cette terre est à moi.* In the first place, he had to leave his little paradise of Cirey and spend several years in Brussels or in its neighborhood on account of the lawsuit of Mme. du Châtelet. A second cousin of M. du Châtelet, named M. le marquis de Trichâteau, had died

a widower, without children, at Cirey, and Mme. du Châtelet claimed the inheritance. Her claim was disputed by the House of Honsbrook, so that Voltaire had to defend himself against the symbol of Arbogad: *Cette terre est à moi.* It was due to his efforts that, after long litigation, Mme. du Châtelet, although she had to renounce the little principality and the title of princess which would have gone with it, received a large sum of money in settlement of her claim. The successful heirs of the Marquis de Trichâteau were connected with Arbogad, not merely by their cry: *Cette terre est à moi,* but also, I think, by a pun on the name of the Marquis. Voltaire poses, in the *Pucelle,* as M. de Trithème. He claims that the book *De tribus impostoribus,* which Des Vignes, the chancellor of the Emperor Frederick II, is supposed to have written, was found by a M. de Trawsmandorf (M. 17, p. 468). He is evidently punning, in both cases, on the trinity (tri-, tris, trois, trine, trithéisme). It is likely, therefore, that Trichâteau is thought of by Voltaire as the château of the trinity, *i. e.,* of Arbogad.

We still have to examine the portrait of

Arbogad in order to determine who he was. We are aided in this analysis by another circumstance. Who was, in Voltaire's time, the particular King who raised the cry: "Cette terre est à moi?" With what particular King, who raised that cry, did Voltaire come into relations? What particular King was intrepid in action, pleasant in social relations, debauched at table, gay in his debauch, a lingerer at rather famous *soupers,* something of a wine-bibber, good *raconteur,* animated in speech until overcome by the fumes of wine, characterized by his frankness, eager to enroll recruits, and especially eager to have Voltaire in his *entourage?*

The answer is beyond the shadow of a doubt: it was Frederick the Great, whom Voltaire persisted in calling the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, a God who believed in no God except himself.

The question: *A qui est cette terre?* was a burning one at the time. It is not necessary that I should describe the situation of Europe; I need only refer the reader to Voltaire's *Précis du siècle de Louis XV.* The various claimants to slices of the Austrian succession prepared, in spite of the Pragmatic sanction of Charles VI,

to which they had all agreed, to enforce their claims by resort to arms. These claims had already been pleaded in publications throughout the whole Christian world (M. 15, p. 191 ff.). "Tous les princes, tous les particuliers, y prenaient intérêt. On s'attendait à une guerre universelle; mais ce qui confondit la politique humaine, c'est que l'orage commenca d'un côté où personne n'avait tourné les yeux." That was the invasion of Silesia by Frederick the Great. Frederick's ancestors had laid claim to four duchies in Silesia, which they had been obliged to renounce because they were weak. Frederick's father had governed his kingdom in the one end of making it strong; he turned everything into soldiers and into money. He brought up the crown prince in the same single aim, namely, that he might make good the claim of Arbogad: *Cette terre est à moi.* Before his invasion of Silesia Frederick and Voltaire had met at the old château de Moiland, near Clèves, in Rhenish Prussia, and very near the little principality of Trichâteau, names most appropriate for Voltaire's symbolism. At Voltaire's arrival, or shortly thereafter, two thousand soldiers of Frederick departed at a gallop, with a

summons written by Voltaire, to enforce Frederick's claim against the Bishop of Liège on the Principality of Herstall (M. 23, p. 153, and *Mémoires pour servir a la vie de Voltaire*). Voltaire calls the two thousand soldiers of Frederick "two thousand demonstrations of his claim." This is the starting point of the episode in Zadig: *Comme il passait près d'un château assez fort, des Arabes armés en sortirent.* The fiction by which Zadig is represented as being attacked by them is due to symbolism, since Voltaire was always warring against the symbol of Arbogad: Intolerance, a war in which Frederick himself came to his aid. There is justification for this symbolism even in the summons which Voltaire wrote against the Bishop ot Liège, since every ecclesiastical prince of Germany was an Arbogad. How could a member of the sect of Christ, whose vow bound him to poverty and humility, arrive at princely dignity except by the methods of Arbogad? Frederick refers to Voltaire's prowess in this little war against the "prince-évêque," and against the arch-robber in the Republic of Letters, Van Duren, the publisher of the *Anti-Machiavel* (M. 35, p. 535): *Le Liégeois que vous abattez, Van*

Duren que vous retenez, etc. In still another sense Frederick had aided Voltaire against Arbogad, namely, in the litigation of Mme. du Châtelet about the principality of Trichâteau. The real significance of Frederick's aid to Voltaire, as symbolized in this episode, is to be sought, however, in the cause of Voltaire's first visit to Berlin. Voltaire's fight against the symbol of Arbogad culminated in his tragedy *Mahomet,* which, he tells us, was inspired by the persecutions of the epoch of the *Voltairomanie.* Mohammed was the greatest non-Jewish, non-Christian brigand of history (cf. Voltaire's parallel between Mohammed and his successors on the one hand and the Jews and their God on the other: *Essai sur les mœurs,* Beuchot 15, p. 323). Voltaire's tragedy, symbolic of the poet's defense of his person from the attacks of religious fanaticism, was being played at Lille, when the author received news of Frederick's victory of Molwitz. He immediately announced the news to the audience, in the expectation, he says, that Frederick's victory would contribute to the success of his drama, *i. e.,* that Arbogad would come to his rescue. Further, when Voltaire was being persecuted in

Paris by the enemies of his tragedy, the *parlementaires,* the *convulsionnaires,* the traducer Desfontaines, the old poet Crébillon, Maurepas and Mirepoix, the Archbishop of Sens and the Archbishop of Strasburg, it was Frederick, the Arbogad of Silesia, as well as the Pope, the Arbogad of Rome, who came to his rescue. Voltaire went to the court of Frederick ostensibly to escape from the persecutions of his enemies in Paris, and he dedicated his tragedy to the pope. Thus Arbogad, having witnessed the prodigious valor of Zadig, one man against a multitude, pushed aside his own soldiers and rescued the hero.

Frederick, half humorously, half seriously, claimed that Voltaire belonged to him by divine right (M. 36, p. 179; Nov. 18, 1742) and that he could seize him wherever he found him. If he had followed his own inclinations he would long ago have printed a manifesto to this effect. Thus the soldiers of Arbogad cry: *Tout ce que vous avez nous appartient, et votre personne appartient à notre maître.* Such references run all through Frederick's correspondence with Voltaire. He threatens to carry him off. He sends him wine, which he drinks, and

by virtue of which, in *Candide,* he becomes an unwilling recruit of the Bulgarian captain. It is the recruiting mania of Frederick's father for tall men, and of Frederick for great men. Voltaire uses the expression *de grands hommes* in an equivocal sense in his letter to Maupertuis (M. 35, p. 468): the six-foot physical giants of the father have given way to the six-foot intellectual giants of the son. Frederick did everything in his power to make Voltaire's return to France impossible (M. 36, p. 211): "Mon intention est de brouiller Voltaire si bien en France qu'il ne lui reste de parti à prendre que celui de venir chez moi." Voltaire was not his dupe this time (M. 36, p. 253): "Ne pouvant me gagner autrement, il croit m'acquérir en me perdant en France; mais je vous jure que j'aimerais mieux vivre dans un village suisse que de jouir à ce prix de la faveur dangereuse d'un roi capable de mettre de la trahison dans l'amitié même: ce serait en ce cas un trop grand malheur de lui plaire. Je ne veux point du palais d'Alcine, où l'on est esclave parce qu'on a été aimé."

Zadig has difficulty in getting clear and precise information out of Arbogad about Moabdar,

Astarté, and the trend of events in the Empire. He informs him, however, that Moabdar is dead, after having gone mad, that Babylon is a great *coupe-gorge, que l'empire est désolé,* and that the time is most opportune for pillaging, *qu'il y a de beaux coups à faire, et que pour ma part j'en ai fait d'admirables.* So Frederick, not more than a month and a half after his first meeting with Voltaire, wrote (M. 35, p. 540; Oct. 26, 1740) that the death of the Emperor had disarranged all his pacific plans; the affair with the Bishop of Liège (which had been settled peaceably by an agreement signed at Berlin, Oct. 20) was nothing at all in comparison to the death of the Emperor, which meant the *bouleversement de l'Europe.* In the words of Arbogad: "Jamais la saison de voler n'a été meilleure, depuis que Moabdar est tué, et que tout est en confusion dans Babylon." At the time of his semi-diplomatic mission to the court of Frederick Voltaire had the same difficulty as Zadig in getting precise information out of Frederick. He finally learned, after many jesting or evasive replies of the King had sorely tried his patience, that Frederick's hesitation about renewing the alliance with France was

due to the fact that Louis XV had not declared war on his uncle, King George of England. Twenty days after this declaration was made Frederick and Louis XV renewed their alliance (March, 1744). Thus Voltaire was instrumental in uniting the two most pronounced Arbogad kings of Europe.

The other features of Arbogad's portrait correspond with those of Frederick. Arbogad's frankness is especially emphasized. So Frederick writes to Voltaire (M. 34, p. 164) that the Germans are distinguished for their good-sense, their candor, and the veracity of their speech. The frankness of the King is often brutal, and shows a cynical disbelief in any virtue except self-interest. Voltaire fears that Frederick despises too much mankind (M. 36, p. 107), since he paints so well *les nobles friponneries des politiques, les soins intéressés des courtisans.* That was, according to the French Ambassador at the court of Frederick, M. de Valori, the particular fault in Frederick's character. Again, the debauchery of Arbogad *à souper,* is a reminiscence of the famous *soupers* of Frederick, in which unbridled license reigned, especially in the brutal frankness of the King's

jests, whether spoken or acted. "Ce gouvernement singulier, ces moeurs encore plus étranges, ce contraste de stoïcisme et d'épicuréisme, de sévérité dans la discipline militaire, et de mollesse dans l'intérieur du palais, des pages avec lesquels on s'amusait dans son cabinet, et des soldats qu'on faisait passer trente-six fois par les baguettes sous les fenêtres du monarque qui les regardait, des discours de morale, et une licence effrénée, tout cela composait un tableau bizarre que peu de personnes connaissaient alors, et qui depuis a percé dans l'Europe" (*Mémoires pour servir à la vie de Voltaire,* M. 1, p. 29).

There are some features of the episode of Arbogad which do not apply to Frederick either in his capacity as King or in his character as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but in his capacity as a man of letters. I wish to show how Voltaire connected him with the symbol of the brigandage of literature.

Frederick had the mania of verse-making, the rage of writing; he was possessed with "ce désir insurmontable, cette fureur . . . de produire ses premiers ouvrages" (M. 34, p. 164). As crown-prince he had begun the composition of the *Anti-Machiavel,* with the publication of

which Voltaire was entrusted. Voltaire picked out a publisher, whose name was later to serve his symbolism, a certain Van Duren, of The Hague, the "publisher of the most horrible calumnies against the Regent, the most signal rogue of Europe." When Frederick became King, and especially when he realized what a fine opportunity he had to put into practice the principles of Machiavelli's prince, which he had so eloquently refuted in his work, he wished to withdraw it from publication. Voltaire's conduct in this negotiation is not above criticism. There is not a doubt in the first place, that he wished to have the *Anti-Machiavel* published as a guarantee to the world of Frederick's attachment to the principles of honor, justice, and humanity (M. 35, p. 541): "J'ai été bien aise," he writes, "qu'un roi ait fait ainsi, entre mes mains, serment à l'univers d'être bon et juste." It was his purpose to make it impossible for Frederick, after the publication of the *Anti-Machiavel,* to act the part of Machiavelli's prince. At the same time he had the positive instructions of the King to withdraw the manuscript. What did he do? He did everything he could to excite the cupidity of Van Duren,

by vague references to the royal author, in spite of the King's prohibition to mention him. He succeeded so well that Van Duren refused, for any consideration whatever, to desist from his purpose of publishing the work. With that object accomplished, Voltaire could do anything he liked to justify himself in Frederick's eyes as a good and faithful servant. He offered Van Duren large sums, which he increased at three different times; he secured possession of the manuscript, folio by folio, on the plea of making necessary corrections, and inserted whatever he liked, ostensibly to make the manuscript useless to Van Duren. Then, after having convinced the King that he had done all in his power to prevent the publication and failed, he secures the permission of Frederick to publish his own version. That was just what Voltaire aimed at, I feel sure, for he made so many changes in the King's work that the author not only disavowed the edition of Van Duren but also that of Voltaire. But here Voltaire fell into a snare from which he had great difficulty in extricating himself. By the law of the land, it seems (M. 35, p. 527), Van Duren had the exclusive right to publish and sell the *Anti-*

Machiavel and for the sole reason that he had been the first to announce his intention of publishing and selling it. That constitutes Voltaire's great grief against Van Duren, and it connects him with the symbol of Arbogad: *Cette terre est à moi.* Although Voltaire rages and fumes he gives Van Duren credit for his business perspicacity (M. 35, p. 523): "Il a raison d'en user ainsi; ces deux éditions et les suivantes feraient sa fortune, et je suis sûr qu'un libraire qui aurait seul le droit de copie en Europe gagnerait trente-mille ducats au moins." That was Van Duren's plan, to possess himself of both manuscripts (M. 35, p. 523): "Il voulait imprimer et le manuscript que j'ai tenté de retirer de ses mains et celui même que j'ai corrigé. Il veut friponner sous le manteau de la loi." His legal right was that of Arbogad: *Cette terre est à moi,* an association for which Frederick was himself responsible. After giving Voltaire permission to go ahead with his own edition and to make whatever changes he wishes so that it may appear as an entirely new and authentic edition and cause that of Van Duren to fall, he says that he will also have to *disputer le terrain à toutes sortes de Van Duren politiques.*

Thus Frederick not only uses a figure equivalent to *Cette terre est à moi* as a symbol for himself and his brother kings, but he gives a typical, a symbolic, meaning, to the name Van Duren.

This episode of Van Duren receives significance by the use the poet made of it in *Candide,* where the connection of the symbol with Frederick is certain. As it has an intimate bearing on the symbolism of Arbogad, I will discuss it here in some detail.

The Episode of Vanderdendur in Candide

As Cacambo and Candide approach the Dutch city and trading station Surinam they come upon a negro stretched on the ground. He is dressed in rags, and is minus the right leg and the left hand. The famous Dutch merchant Vanderdendur has treated him thus; it is the custom there; it is at this cost that the people of Europe eat sugar. Candide sheds sincere tears over the fate of the poor negro and continues on his way to Surinam. Here Vanderdendur offers him transportation to Venice, which he sells successively for 10,000, 20,000, and 30,000 piasters. His cupidity has been

aroused by the readiness with which Candide agrees to all his demands. He conspires to get possession of all that Candide calls his own and then to sail away. He succeeds in doing this. Candide appeals to the courts. The judge begins by fining him 10,000 piasters for contempt, another 10,000 as costs, and then graciously promises to look into the matter when Vanderdendur shall have returned. "Ce procédé acheva de désespérer Candide; il avait à la vérité essuyé des malheurs mille fois plus douloureux; mais le sangfroid du juge, et celui du patron dont il était volé, alluma sa bile, et le plongea dans une noire mélancholie. La méchanceté des hommes se présentait à son esprit dans toute sa laideur, il ne se nourrissait que d'idées tristes."

It is impossible not to recognize here the Van Duren of The Hague, to whom Voltaire had offered successively 1000, 2000, 3000 florins, *et enfin jusqu'à mille ducats* (Letter of Voltaire to M. Cyrille Le Petit, Oct. 3, 1741; M. 35, p. 516), and who plotted so cleverly to get possession of both manuscripts of the *Anti-Machiavel.* Voltaire had had a lawsuit with him at The Hague, and he was sued by him

again at Frankfort at the time of the poet's detention there in 1753. Van Duren presented a bill for an old account, which Voltaire, with his accustomed malice, ascribes to Frederick (M. 1, p. 43; *Mémoires pour servir à la vie de Voltaire*): "Il prétendait que sa Majesté lui redevait une vingtaine de ducats, et que j'en étais responsable. Il comptait l'intérêt, et l'intérêt de l'intérêt. Le sieur Fichard, bourgmêstre de Francfort, qui était même le bourgmêstre régnant, comme cela se dit, trouva, en qualité be bourgmêstre, le compte très-juste, et, en qualité de régnant, il me fit débourser trente ducats, en prit vingt-six pour lui, et en donna quatre au fripon de libraire."

Voltaire's symbolism here is obscured by the name Vanderdendur, and the poet probably intended this to be so. It is not Van Duren, but Frederick the Great that Voltaire has in mind; it is not Surinam, but (Francfort) *sur-Main,* for which Surinam is an exact anagramme. The following considerations will demonstrate this, in so far as one can speak of a demonstration here.

In the first place, Voltaire is here confronted with the old symbolism of Arbogad: *Cette terre*

est à moi. In the land of the Francs, in the city of the Free, in a Free Imperial City, Francfort, Frederick had no rights except those of Arbogad. He had no jurisdiction there, except that of the brigand. Voltaire complained, and never ceased complaining, of this violation of international rights. But to all his representations he received the reply that Frederick had more authority in Francfort than the Emperor. His appeals to the Emperor were not even answered, it seems: Arbogad was supreme.

In the second place, the poor mutilated negro, whose left leg and right hand had been cut off by Vanderdendur, is simply a variation on the episode of Candide among the Bulgarians, which, in turn, represents Voltaire among the Prussians. Voltaire considered that his experience at the court of Frederick was symbolized by the experience of the poor Franc-Comtois, Courtils, whose tragedy he relates in the *Mémoires pour servir à la vie de Voltaire.* Courtils, like Voltaire, had been enticed to the court of Berlin on the promise of being made chamberlain to his majesty, Frederick William, but was put in a regiment of giants instead. Courtils deserted, was caught, brought

back, made to run the gauntlet of a regiment of soldiers armed with ram-rods, had his nose and his ears cut off, after which he was thrown in the military prison of Spandau, from which Voltaire's eloquent verse secured his release. The negro had lost an arm and a leg for asserting his right to the noblest privilege of humanity: liberty; Courtils had lost his nose and his ears for the same reason; Candide had been made to *passer trente-six fois par les baguettes* for the same reason; and Voltaire had been plunged into the black flood of the Styx and made to drink the bitterness of death for the same cause. In reference to the *grand drame de sa vie,* as Desnoiresterres calls the Francfort episode, Voltaire writes (M. 9, p. 269), epitomizing the episode of *Candide in Eldorado,* followed by *Candide in Surinam:*

> " Au haut des cieux ils vous mènent d'abord,
> Puis on vous plonge au fond de l'onde noire,
> Et vous buvez l'amertume et la mort."

Like the poor negro, like Courtils, like Candide, Voltaire had in vain tried to escape from Arbogad. Freytag and Schmidt, Frederick's accredited brigands, *deux écumeurs barbares,*

caught him at the frontiers of Mainz, brought him back, searched and robbed him, treated him with cruel indignities, first at the home of Schmidt, then in the Bockshorn, *aux cornes de bouc,* fit symbol of the great god Pan, the flute-player Frederick, the god of the trees, of the garden, of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He was made to sign an affidavit that he had sinned against his royal master in trying to escape, and that Freytag and Schmidt were justified in taking the measures which they had taken; further, that he would never speak or write about this matter, and that, if he failed to return all the writings which might later be found with which the King of Prussia had honored him, he would submit to any measures which the King might see fit to take, no matter where he might be located at the time. One can not help hearing the words of Arbogad's brigands: *Tout ce que vous avez nous appartient, et votre personne appartient à notre maître.*

In the third place, Voltaire betrays his symbolism by his reference, in the episode of Vanderdendur, to Candide's baggage. *Combien voulez-vous,* he says to the brigand, *pour me mener en droiture à Venise, moi, mes gens, mon*

bagage, et les deux moutons que voilà. Now, Candide had no baggage on arriving at Surinam. He had nothing but the two red sheep loaded with the diamonds of the King of Eldorado. Here again the reference is unmistakable. The King of Prussia had written to his military agent at Francfort, the Baron von Freytag, to hold Voltaire a prisoner until his baggage should have arrived, and in case it had already passed Francfort, or had been forwarded by another route, to detain him, under arrest, if necessary, until it should have been brought back and thoroughly searched for the *œuvre de poéshie du roi mon maître,* as Freytag is represented as saying, or, as Voltaire ironically calls the diamonds of the King's pen, *les joyaux de la couronne brandebourgeoise.* Freytag promised to allow Voltaire to depart on the arrival of the Leipzig baggage, in which the *œuvre de poéshie* was contained, but he plotted to get all of Voltaire's baggage, just as Vanderdendur plots to get all of the baggage of Candide. Thus the reference to the baggage of the hero, unjustified in the episode taken by itself, receives its *raison d'être* from Voltaire's experience at Francfort.

In the last place, Voltaire betrays his sym-

bolism by Candide's appeal to the law of the land. The only satisfaction he obtained was the gracious promise to look into the matter when Vanderdendur should have returned. What question can there be in the episode of the return of the brigand? None at all; he who steals enough to buy up twenty kingdoms can not be expected to run off with his plunder only to return with it. The reference receives significance only when applied to Frederick. Voltaire had appealed to the Imperial Council of Francfort against the usurpation of Frederick, but Freytag and Schmidt defeated his purpose by representing that they were awaiting new orders from the king. Frederick was no longer at Potsdam; he had gone to Königsberg. Nothing could be done until he returned. So Voltaire's imprisonment was prolonged until the archrobber Arbogad could be consulted.

I referred above to Voltaire's epitome of his experience at the court of Frederick, followed by that of Francfort, as symbolized in the experience of Candide in Eldorado and Surinam.

"Au haut des cieux ils vous mènent d'abord,
Puis on vous plonge au fond de l'onde noire,
Et vous buvez l'amertume et la mort."

I may be excused for following up this line of thought to explain the symbolism of Eldorado, as it is connected with the question of inequality in society which aroused Arbogad's envy and started him on his career of pillage. It is hardly a digression, therefore, since Voltaire's symbolism is like a spider's web: everything is connected with everything else. It is that fact which makes the difficulty of presentation so great. His symbolism is like the system of Leibnitz and the ideas of Pascal, who claimed that it was impossible to understand anything in the universe because, everything being connected with everything else, one can not grasp the significance of any part without knowing the whole; and since a knowledge of the whole universe is, on the face of it, impossible to mortal man, therefore the knowledge of any part of it is impossible.

The Episode of Eldorado

The "diamonds" of the Imagination, the "jewels" of literature, is a common figure with Voltaire. One of his earliest uses of it is the following (M. 33, p. 210): *Plus on a fait provision des richesses de l'antiquité, et plus on*

est dans l'obligation de les transporter en son pays. In reference to an *Épitre* of Formont (M. 33, p. 477), he says: *Devant les indigents votre main accumule les vastes trésors de Crésus.* This theme appears most frequently and persistently in Frederick's correspondence with Voltaire. The very first letter of the Crown Prince (M. 34, p. 101) contains it. Frederick refers, not to Voltaire's *ouvrages,* but to his *voyages,* in which he finds *des trésors d'esprit.* At the time of this letter Voltaire's muse was in Perou, *i. e.,* Voltaire had gone on a literary expedition to Perou, just as La Condamine had gone there on a scientific expedition (M. 10, p. 511):

> "Ma muse et son compas sont tous deux au Pérou:
> Il suit, il examine, et je peins la nature.
> Je m'occupe à chanter les pays qu'il mesure:
> Qui de nous deux est le plus fou?"

It is by such a figure of speech that he can say that he has traversed the whole world; and more: by his fictions, in which representatives of other planets come to this little "heap of mud" called the earth, and other fictions by which he is caught up into the air and is carried from

planet to planet, he can say that he has traversed the universe. It is likely that, by such fictions, he desired to show his contemporaries the real significance, and at the same time the abuse that had been made of it, of the miraculous episode of the Bible, by which Elias was transfigured, or that of Mohammed, who traveled, on his horse Borac, through the air. When Voltaire reads Marmontel's book on the Incas much later, he refers to it as the vessel which transported him to Mexico and Perou with Marmontel.

Frederick refers to Voltaire's works: *La Pucelle, Le Siècle de Louis XIV, Les Éléments de la philosophie de Newton* (M. 34, p. 263) as the Golden Fleece; his *Traité de Métaphysique* is likened to the great diamond of Pitt, or the Sanci, *qui, dans leur petit volume, renferment des trésors immenses.* He would believe himself richer in possessing Voltaire's works than in possessing all the wealth of the world, which the same fortune gives and takes away (M. 34, p. 104). He says (M. 35, p. 424): "Mon cher Voltaire, les gallions de Bruxelles m'ont apporté des trésors qui sont pour moi audessus de tout prix. Je m'étonne de la prodigi-

euse fécondité de votre Pérou, qui paraît inépuisable."

These references might be multiplied, but enough has been given to show the basis, or one of the elements, of the episode of Eldorado. It is first of all the Land of the Imagination, the diamonds of which are *des trésors d'esprit.* One of its applications is certainly to the court of Frederick, and for the following reasons.

In the first place, Voltaire's very first letter to the Prince says that Frederick can bring back the *âge d'or, i. e.,* Eldorado, into his kingdom (M. 34, p. 107).

In the second place, Voltaire calls Frederick the God of Paradise, which is a way of saying that he is the King of Eldorado, and by the following associations: Cirey is the terrestrial paradise (cf. *Le Mondain*), Cirey is also Eldorado, *i. e.,* the Perou of Voltaire's Imagination, from the inexhaustible mines of which he extracts his *trésors d'esprit.* But Frederick is the King, and the only King, in the Republic of Letters, *i. e.,* in the Land of the Imagination; he is the only *roi qui se mêle d'écrire.* He is therefore the King of Eldorado. He is "Divus Federicus" (M. 34, 426, p. 561), he is the

"God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob" (M. 34, p. 317), *i. e.*, he is the King, or the God of the Garden, the King, or the God of Paradise; the King or the God of the New Jerusalem, in short, of the Utopia *où tout est bien,* "where all is well."

In the third place, Frederick's father had amassed *des tonneaux d'or,* Voltaire says (M. 10, p. 312 and Marmontel's *Mémoires,* 1, pp. 265–266); he converted everything into money, all of which Frederick inherited. When Voltaire came to Frederick's court he desired to have his share of this wealth. He drove a hard bargain with the King. He tried to get possession of Saxon securities at a low figure, in defiance of the King's orders that there should be no speculation in them. (Cf. Herrig's Archiv, Vol. 16 (1906), pp. 429 ff.) Finally, he sent all his money out of the kingdom and prepared to leave the court for ever. He had, or he claimed to have had, the greatest difficulty in getting permission from the King to leave. Here, in the episode of Eldorado, Voltaire gives free vent to his terrible irony. Of course the King of Eldorado would not think of detaining a traveler in his kingdom; Candide was at liberty to depart.

He may also take with him the King's *trésors d'esprit, le livre de poéshie du roi mon maître.* He is raised to the top of the heavens, *au haut des cieux,* in a remarkable fashion; he departs with the "Golden Fleece," with "the great diamond of Pitt," with the "Sanci," with the "inexhaustible treasures of the mines of Perou," all securely encased in red-bound sheep-skin, like the magnificent red-Morocco-bound volumes of the *Anti-Machiavel* which Van Duren was to send to the court of *un très-grand prince d'Allemagne.* When he arrives at Surinam, *i. e.,* when Voltaire arrives at Francfort, the one has to give up to Vanderdendur the two red sheep with their immense treasures, the other has to give up *die von seiner Königlichen Majestät höchst eigenen Händen viele Briefe und Skripturen* (cf. *Voltaire in Frankfurt, 1753,* Zsc. f. fr. Sp. u. U., Vol. 27, by Hermann Haupt), and, according to the *Mémoires pour servir à la vie de Voltaire,* large sums of money, the equivalence of all that Voltaire had obtained from Frederick during his stay in Prussia. Thus the King of Eldorado, in the person of Vanderdendur, proves himself to be the God and the Robber of the Garden, *i. e.,* Arbogad, who thun-

ders, from among the trees of the Garden about Voltaire's "trunks," who had already kicked Candide out of the wooded Westphalian Garden, in the person of the old Baron Thunder-ten-tronckh, who proves himself to be "le roi des Bulgares" and "le roi des bougres," whose symbols are the flute of the satyr and great war-god Pan, *i. e.*, the thunderer of the mountains, and the "cornes du bouc" of the God of Moses, of Socrates, of Theodore de Bèze, of Candide, whom the Genevan prophet and successor of Calvin loved, etc. One could make a series of equations several pages long for the protean forms of association under which Frederick appears in Voltaire's novels.

The assimilation of Frederick as Arbogad with the Dutch publisher Van Duren, the robber of the literary garden of Eden in which Voltaire's imagination roved and from which he drew his *trésors d'esprit* leads us here to an investigation of the literary brigandage of which Voltaire so often complained. How clearly the secret of Voltaire's symbolism comes out in the following couplet from his *Discours sur l'Envie* (M. 9, p. 395):

"O vous qui de l'honneur entrez dans la carrière,
Cette route à vous seul appartient-elle entière?"

In other words, in the words of Arbogad, who gave you the right to say: *Cette terre est à moi?* Is that land yours alone? Who constituted you the despot of the Garden of the Imagination? By what right do you justify your claim to be lord of all that you survey? What right has a publisher to seize Voltaire's work and deface it, and sell it to the world without rendering an account to the author? What right has a critic, like Desfontaines, to keep open booth, where he sells praise and blame to the highest bidder? What right has Rousseau to decry *Zaïre* as a sermon against the *grâce efficace* of the Jansenists? What right has Lefranc de Pompignan to pillage Metastasio, as Rousseau pillaged Marot and Rabelais? What right, if not the usurpation and tyranny of Arbogad, with his cry: *Cette terre est à moi?*

Like all the scribblers of Europe, Frederick was not a diamond of literature "by the grace of God." He hoped to become one, however, as did his confères, with practice and with Voltaire, *i. e.,* with Cunégonde, Voltaire's muse, as *blanchisseuse de son linge sale.* What does the

"grain of sand in the Republic of Letters" do? Does he desist from writing? Is he content to remain, by convention, what he is by nature, an unknown atom in the immensity of the desert or of the ocean? Voltaire tells us what he does in another apologue, quite similar to the one which started Arbogad on his career of plunder (M. 17, p. 570). In view of the enormous number of books in the world, he says, one would think that the person tempted to write would be discouraged and desist; but, on the contrary, he says to himself: "Those books are not read, and mine may be." He compares himself to the drop of water that complained at the thought of being lost in the immensity of the ocean. A spirit took pity on it and had it swallowed by an oyster. In a few years it became a beautiful pearl and graced the throne of the Great Mogul. So the wretched scribbler works away in his garret in the hope of becoming a pearl. Such people never think, they compile, they pillage the living and the dead, they rob the diamonds and the possessors of the diamonds, they besmirch the reputation of the great and noble and travesty virtue into vice.

Voltaire makes, in his *Discours sur l'Envie,*

an appeal to the *gens de lettres* to live without dissensions. They would then be like the noble trees of the mount of Parnassus, the lofty pines and the noble oaks, whose peaks touch the heavens, whose roots descend into the realm of the dead, whose branches cover the earth, and in whose shadow the vile serpents, the ravenous wolves, the envious robbers and brigands, give battle to each other and moisten their roots with their impure blood. The composition of this discourse points to the application of the robbers of the literary garden to the calumnies of Desfontaines and Rousseau. Voltaire images Rousseau under the picture of the hungry and tyrannical wolf of the forest, and Desfontaines under the serpent. It is the epoch of the *Voltairomanie.* Voltaire tells us that the persecutions to which he was subjected at this time inspired him to write *Mahomet.* It is, at first, difficult to see the connection between the *Voltairomanie* and *Mahomet.* It is plain from the motto and the episode of Arbogad. *C'est la manie de voler la terre, c'est-à-dire, la Voltairomanie.* It is the period of the gobbling-up of lands and the gobbling-up of Voltaire. The mania manifested itself in Frederick lit-

erally and equivocally; he seized Silesia, and he tried to seize Voltaire. The mania manifested itself in the religious persecutions to which Voltaire was subjected in the name of the God of the Garden for the *Lettres philosophiques,* for the *Mondain,* for the *Éléments de la philosophie de Newton.* Above all, the mania manifested itself in the *Voltairomanie* of Desfontaines, when Voltaire seemed to be deserted by all his friends, even those who owed him the greatest obligations.

The success of *Alzire,* against the hope of Lefranc de Pompignan who had stolen the subject and who had expected to present his tragedy at the *Théâtre-Français* before Voltaire, aroused the enemies of the poet as never before. As Condorcet says, Cirey hid his person, but not his glory; he excited so much envy that he might be considered a prince. The culmination of this enmity and envy was the *Voltairomanie* of Desfontaines. "After that," he is represented as saying, "Voltaire has nothing left to do except to go hang himself." To add to the despair of the poet, which was never more acute than at this time, unless it be at the time of his detention at Francfort, his best friends turned

against him, especially Thieriot, who, like Arbogad, wished to drink his Champagne in peace (M. 35, p. 105, 147, 149) and amuse himself in the house of the *fermier-général,* La Popelinière, himself an Arbogad. Thieriot, the robber of the subscriptions of the *Henriade,* seems to have associated himself with Desfontaines, who began the brigandage of which Voltaire complains by his fraudulent edition of the *Henriade* (M. 25, p. 584). Thus they come under the symbolism as a composite character. Even Voltaire's publishers turned against him. Mme. du Châtelet writes (M. 35, p. 265) that she has been obliged to keep from him *l'horreur de ses libraires.* Anonymous publications, forged by Rousseau and consummated by Desfontaines, accusing him of atheism, found their way to the chief men in power at court, and Voltaire lived in fear of a *lettre de cachet.* False *dévots* joined them and covered their fury of injuring him with the mantle of religion. Rumors that copies of the *Pucelle* were being circulated caused him mortal fear, as is so graphically described by Mme. de Grafigny. The mania of the French, probably justified by the practice of 18th century French authors,

of seeing allusions to themselves in his characters is also the subject of his complaints. No career of honor was open to a man of letters in France, as in England. Addison would have been persecuted in France, because somebody would have recognized some traits of the portrait *d'un portier d'un homme en place* in *Cato*. No sooner had Voltaire arrived in Paris, after an absence of about three years, when some one told Fleury that he had composed a life of the old Nestor-Cardinal. He was in the position of Damocles; a trifle could prove his ruin.

Voltaire had to fight against the brigandage of literature not only with his pen; or the attacks, at all events, were not limited to that instrument. At least twice he had suffered assault and battery. The earliest case was that of the French officer and spy of the Regent, M. Solenne de Beauregard. The brigand Saint-Hyacinthe, whom Voltaire had known in Paris at the time of *Œdipe,* and whom he had met and expelled from his house as a common thief in London (*i. e.,* if we are to believe his account, which, like so many of his accusations, is only true by symbolism), had written up this episode of Beauregard under the title of *La Déification du*

docteur Aristarchus Masso, and had appended it to his new edition of *Le chef-d'œuvre d'un inconnu, ou Mathanasius* in 1732 (M. 22, p. 257 f.). In other words, it was, for Voltaire, the *deification of the robber in the Republic of Letters, i. e.,* Arbogad. It seems that this satire on the poet was not known to him until Desfontaines repeated it in the *Voltairomanie* (M. 23, p. 40, note). In that case, the letter of Voltaire which first makes mention of it (M. 33, p. 484) is certainly misdated and misplaced (February 26, 1735 should be February 26, 1739). When Voltaire learned of it he sought a retraction from Saint-Hyacinthe. He even threatened to take Saint-Hyacinthe's life if he did not signify that he did not have Voltaire in mind in the composition of his *Déification.* He tries to get a signed statement from Mlle. Quinault that he had not been the victim of Beauregard, and that the story of Saint-Hyacinthe and its application to Voltaire was a calumny (M. 35, p. 155 f., and elsewhere). She showed him that there might be additional ridicule heaped upon him by such a declaration signed by members of the *Comédie-Française.* Finally Voltaire succeeded in getting from his enemy a

declaration which is so good a characterization of Voltaire's own method of composition that I insert it here. It runs as follows (M. 35, p. 267):

"La Déification dont on parle n'est qu'un ouvrage d'imagination, un tissu de fictions qu'on a lié ensemble pour en faire un récit suivi. On y a eu en vue de marquer en général les défauts où tombent les savants de divers genres et de diverses nations. On y a donc été obliger d'imaginer des choses particulières, qui, quoique rapportées comme des choses particulières, ne doivent être regardées que comme des généralités applicables à tous les savants qui peuvent tomber dans ces défauts. On ne peut faire une allégorie ni un caractère que l'imagination d'un lecteur ne puisse appliquer à quelqu'un que l'auteur même n'aura jamais vu. Ainsi ce qui n'aura, dans un ouvrage de fiction, qu'un objet général, en devient un particulier par la malignité d'une fausse interprétation. Si cela est permis, monsieur, il ne faut plus songer à écrire, à moins que le public, plus réservé, ne juge de l'intention d'un auteur conformément au but général de l'ouvrage, et qu'il ne fasse retomber sur l'interprète la malignité de l'interprétation."

That is as far as Saint-Hyacinthe would ever go, and, as a matter of fact, he could not go further without dishonoring himself; for it is undoubted that he did have Voltaire in mind. It seems that Voltaire never made use of this exposition of the methods of the realistic-symbolic author of the eighteenth century. It would not have convinced anybody, if he had. It would never have occurred to any one, even to the most *malin faiseur d'interprétations* to apply the *Déification* to a person whom the author had never known, as he suggests in his apology. In the literary wars of the eighteenth century one did not fire into the blue air; one aimed at the heart of one's enemy.

It is very likely that Voltaire had Beauregard in mind in the composition of the episode of Arbogad, and for the following reasons, (1) because Arbogad is an exact anagramme of Beauregard, with the equivalence of the diphthong and the simple vowel "o" admitted, (2) because Beauregard was a spy and officer in the service of the Regent, the "God-Father," the *Joachim Prépucier,* father and husband of the *Pucelle,* and (3), because Voltaire has described in Zadig the other beating to which he was sub-

jected, that of Rohan-Chabot, under similar symbolism, that of Orcan.

Voltaire rounds out his symbolism in many ways and makes connections which it is not easy to follow. He realized, as did few authors in the century of Rousseau, that there was no possibility of equality among men. He praises the sentiment of Milton (M. 36, p. 107): "Amongst equals no society." That, to him, was an obvious proof that the paradise of our first parents was foolish. What Voltaire proved, in one of his *Discours en vers sur l'homme,* was the equality of conditions. There is no reason why the grain of sand in the desert should not be just as good and just as happy as the diamond in the crown of the Great Mogul. There must be grains of sand and drops of water. If the grains of sand and the drops of water are not just as happy and just as good as the diamonds and the pearls, it is because of envy. With their eyes green with envy they raise their cry for equality of temporal possessions. Now both the Rousseau had incurred Voltaire's enmity by their meditations on the origin of inequality among men (cf. Voltaire's reference to the elder Rousseau's galimatias M. 24, p. 223:

Paralelle d'Horace, de Boileau, de Pope). They both paint the state of nature as a paradise where all is well, because all were equal. Compare the following quotations from Jean-Baptiste Rousseau with the famous paradoxes of Jean-Jacques (*Œuvres de Jean Baptiste Rousseau,* Vol. 1, p. 468 ff.):

> "Ils vivaient tous également heureux;
> Et la nature était riche pour eux.
> Toute la terre était leur héritage.
> L'égalité faisait tout leur partage.
> Chacun était et son juge et son roi."

Then discord was produced by intellectual curiosity, by scientific aspirations. People began to ask themselves these questions: *Comment s'est fait tout ce que nous voyons? Pourquoi ce ciel, ces astres, ces rayons?* Then Rousseau apostrophizes Reason:

> "Folle raison! lumière déplorable
> Qui n'insinue à l'homme misérable
> Que le mépris d'une simplicité
> Si nécessaire à sa félicité!"

As a result of this intellectual curiosity questions, doubts, discussions, disputes, factions arose, and with them inequality.

"Ainsi chacun ne songeant plus qu'à soi,
On eut besoin pour prévenir les guerres
De recourir au partage des terres;
Et d'un seul peuple, on vit dans l'univers,
Naître en un jour mille peuples divers."

With the division of the surface of the earth and the formation of different peoples all the bonds of friendship were broken by self-interest; avarice, theft, treason, perjury, were visible on all sides. To better establish her empire Morosophie (*i. e.*, Folly) invented the art of writing, and a thousand other arts more detestable still, from which was born the most detestable of all our enemies, Luxury, which makes the poor man feel his poverty:

"Le luxe, ami de l'oisive mollesse,
Qui parmi nous signalant sa souplesse,
Introduisit par cent divers canaux
La pauvreté, le plus dur de nos maux."

That was just the opposite of Voltaire's philosophy, and, indeed, the *Mondain* was composed purely and simply as a sermon against just such ideas. Likewise, the old Rousseau was constantly mingling Providence with his wretched little affairs, proving, to his own satisfaction, that this world, as in the system

of Leibnitz and the religion of the Jansenists, was under the immediate direction of God, and that the prosperity of the wicked was only the effect of God's wrath, which would be visited upon their heads in ways which we know not (*op. cit.*, p. 445):

> "Et qu'en un mot se désordre apparent
> Dont ici bas le cahos vous surprend,
> Est un nuage, un voile nécessaire
> Qui confondant votre orgueil téméraire,
> Cache à vos yeux de ténèbres couverts
> L'ordre réglé qui régit l'univers."

His *ordre réglé*, however, was the "individualistic" Providence of the Jansenists.

The same thoughts are at the bottom of Jean Jacques Rousseau's diatribes against inequality and in favor of Providence.

Curiosity, the origin of the arts and sciences, the necessity of leisure, luxury, all these things hang together in the relation of cause and effect. The poor man is poor just because the rich man is rich, and the rich man enjoys his wealth only in proportion to the misery of the poor man! "Il faut des jus dans nos cuisines, voilà pourquoi tant de malades manquent de bouillon; il faut des liqueurs sur nos tables; voilà pourquoi

le paysan ne boit que de l'eau; il faut de la poudre à nos perruques; voilà pourquoi tant de pauvres n'ont point de pain." To this M. Bordes well replies: "S'il n'y avait point de luxe, il n'y aurait que des pauvres." The whole argument of his prize discourse is that God placed us in a state of ignorance, covering from our eyes all the operations of nature with a heavy veil as if to warn us not to seek to penetrate her secrets; there are no kinds of knowledge which are not hidden from us; the sciences are like dangerous weapons which a mother snatches from her children and hides from them.

Voltaire had connected the old Rousseau with his symbolism of Arbogad; he had much more reason to connect the young Rousseau with similar creations in *Candide.* The old Rousseau, writing against *Zaïre* and weeping from envy, himself the author of *comédies sifflées,* and the young Rousseau, thundering against the comedy from his old donjon open to the four winds of heaven, likewise the author of *comédies sifflées,* were too much alike not to be associated by Voltaire, even if they were not already associated by virtue of their name.

Pangloss, in *Candide,* is a composite portrait of the two Rousseau, and the younger Rousseau appears in several other characters and episodes of the novel, namely, wherever there is a symbol of spoken nonsense, of carnosity, of intolerance, of envy, of wine-bibbing, of inequality in the person of a domestic, and as part and parcel of Thunder-ten-tronckh and the King of Eldorado.

It would seem as if Jean Jacques had read and mistaken the import of the episode of Arbogad. Voltaire lashed in this character the symbol of brigandage and of tyranny. He had come after the lots had been cast, had dispossessed the rightful owners, had robbed and slain in the name of the Deity in him incorporate. It would seem that Jean Jacques saw in it nothing but the source of all our ills, as the bearer of the idea of ownership, without reference to the manner in which ownership was attained. He begins the second part of his *Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes* with the symbol of Arbogad: "The man who first staked out a portion of the earth and said: *This land is mine,* and found people to believe him, is the source of all our woes. He would have been

the greatest benefactor of the race who should have pulled up his stakes and said to him: *Les fruits sont à tous, la terre n'est à personne.*"

Voltaire annotated Rousseau's fine paradoxes with marginal remarks. This is his note to the above (M. 32, p. 470): "Quoi! celui qui a planté, semé, et enclos, n'a pas le droit aux fruits de sa peine? Quoi! un homme injuste et voleur aurait été le bienfaiteur du genre humain! Voilà la philosophie d'un gueux!" In other words, *voilà la philosophie d'Arbogad.* And when this *gueux,* this "Arbogad," began to put his philosophy into practice; when he began to declaim against Voltaire's pet hobby, the theatre; when, in conjunction with other Arbogad, he began to cause persecution against Voltaire and the Encyclopedists, so that the author of *Zadig* felt obliged to give up his little estate within the territory of Geneva, and migrate to Ferney, where Arbogad could not say: *Cette terre est à moi et tout ce que vous avez m'appartient de droit divin;* then, indeed, it was time for the author of the episode of Arbogad to get his symbols out of the cedar chest and set them into motion on his miniature *théâtre de la vie humaine.* That is just what

he did in *Candide,* where Arbogad appears primarily in Thunder-ten-tronckh; for the brigand has raised again his well known cry: *Cette terre est à moi.* Frederick was thundering at the gates of Leipzig, the birth-place of Leibnitz; Rousseau was thundering at the gates of *Les Délices,* which, like the home of Leibnitz, was the *pays où tout est bien.* The Socinians of Geneva and the Jesuits and the Jansenists had united to thunder at the gates of the Encyclopedia; in short, from the straits of Gibraltar to the straits of Magellan and the farthest Indies the Lord of Hosts was hurling his thunderbolts, *i. e.,* Arbogad was supreme.

CHAPTER VIII

JESRAD

The episode of the Angel and the Hermit has always been considered as the bearer of the philosophic thesis of the novel *Zadig*. It is important, therefore, that we consider it in some detail.

This is the episode.

In the tournament to decide who shall be King of Babylon and husband of Astarté Zadig has triumphed over all contestants. While he is resting from the fatigues of the day, Itobad, the most vain and the most ridiculous of all the combatants, steals the white armor given to Zadig by the Queen, and puts his own green armor in its place. He then presents himself to the chief Magian, declaring that an *homme comme lui* is the victor, and is proclaimed King of Babylon while Zadig is still sleeping. When Zadig awakes he is obliged to don the green armor of Itobad, because he has nothing else to put on. He sallies forth in it and is ill-treated

by the rabble, who mistake him for Itobad. Zadig finally breaks through the ranks of his persecutors and walks, in great perturbation, along the banks of the Euphrates, persuaded that his evil star destines him to irremediable misfortune.

"That's what comes of waking up too late," he says to himself. "If I had slept less I should now be King of Babylon and husband of Astarté." He murmurs against Providence. He feels that all his wisdom, his morals, his courage, avail him nothing; on the contrary, they only serve to his misfortune.

In this mood he exchanges his green armor for a long robe and a cowl, and then continues his walk along the Euphrates. He soon meets a venerable hermit, who is reading in the book of fate. Zadig is versed in many languages, but he finds himself unable to read a word in this book. The hermit asks Zadig for permission to accompany him; he has sometimes, he says, been a source of consolation to the unfortunate. Zadig feels respect for the venerable air of the hermit, for his beard, and for his book, and is glad to have his company. The hermit discourses on destiny, justice, morality,

the sovereign good, human frailty, vice, virtue, and with such lively eloquence that Zadig is more and more attracted to him, and finally, at the request of the hermit, promises not to quit him for three days, no matter what may happen.

The two travelers are received the first night in the castle of a great lord, who exercises lavish hospitality for the sake of vanity and ostentation. The hermit steals from him a large basin of gold, adorned with emeralds and rubies. Zadig is surprised, but says nothing. They next come to the house of a rich miser, who has some bad food given to them in a stable, where a servant watches them that they may not steal anything. To this servant the hermit gives two gold pieces which he had received from his host of the night before, and asks to be brought into the presence of his master. The hermit thanks profusely the rich miser for his hospitality and presents to him the precious basin which he had stolen. The miser nearly faints. The hermit and Zadig take advantage of his confusion and depart. Zadig can no longer contain his surprise; he asks the meaning of such strange conduct. His companion assures him that their first host, whose hospitality was

due to his vanity, will be wiser in the future, while the miser will be hospitable to strangers from this time on. Zadig could not determine whether he had to do with a madman or with the wisest of men, and he continued to follow him.

They arrive at the house of a philosopher who was neither prodigal nor avaricious, and who cultivated wisdom and virtue without ever feeling bored by them. His treatment of the strangers is simple, courteous, hospitable. The conversation turns on Providence and the passions of men. "How baneful the passions are," exclaims Zadig. The hermit assures him that they are the winds which swell the sails of the vessel; they submerge it sometimes, it is true, but it could not sail without them. The bile makes one choleric and ill, but without it we could not live. Everything is necessary here below, and everything is dangerous. He contends that men are wrong to "juger d'un tout, dont ils n'aperçoivent que la plus petite partie." The next morning, as a mark of esteem for his host, the hermit sets fire to his house and flees, drawing Zadig after him. *Dieu merci, dit-il, voilà la maison de mon cher hôte détruite de*

fond en comble! L'heureux homme! At these words Zadig is tempted to burst out laughing, to reproach the *révérend père,* to beat him, and to run away, all at the same time; but he does none of these things, he continues to follow him to their last stopping place.

They are taken in by a charitable and virtuous widow, who has a nephew of fourteen, her only hope and consolation. The next morning she orders the youth, in the kindness of her heart, to accompany her guests to a bridge, which, recently broken, might prove dangerous passage to them. The hermit, as a mark of gratitude to his hostess, catches her nephew by the hair and throws him into the river, where he drowns miserably. Zadig breaks out in horror at this treacherous act; he calls his companion a monster and the most execrable of men. The hermit interrupts him and deigns to explain. Under the ruins of the house to which Providence has set fire the philosopher will find an immense treasure. The youth whose neck Providence has wrung, would, had he lived, have assassinated his good aunt within a year, and Zadig within two. *Qui te l'a dit, barbare?* cries Zadig; *et quand tu aurais lu cet événement*

dans ton livre des destinées, t'est-il permis de noyer un enfant qui ne t'a point fait de mal? While Zadig is still speaking he perceives that the hermit is being metamorphosed: his beard has disappeared, his features have grown youthful, four fair wings cover a majestic body resplendent with light. Zadig prostrates himself, crying: *O envoyé du ciel! ô ange divin! tu es donc descendu de l'empyrée pour apprendre à un faible mortel à se soumettre aux ordres éternels?*

Les hommes, said the angel Jesrad, *jugent de tout sans rien connaître: tu étais celui de tous les hommes qui méritais le plus d'être éclairé.*

Zadig asks permission to question the angel; he lacked confidence, he said, in his own judgment, and wished to have his doubts cleared up.

"Would it not have been better," he asks, "to have corrected that youth, and made him virtuous, than to drown him?"

"If he had become virtuous," replied the angel, "and had lived it would have been his destiny to have been assassinated himself, with the woman whom he would have married, and the child that was to be born of their union."

Zadig asks: "But why is it necessary that

there should be crimes and misfortunes, and that good people should be their victims?"

The angel replied that the wicked were always unhappy. "They serve to try the small number of the just scattered about the earth. Besides," he added, "there is no evil from which good does not result."

"But if there were only good, and no evil?" asks Zadig.

"Then," replied the angel, "this earth would be a different earth, the concatenation of events would be a different order of wisdom; and that order, which would be perfect, could only be in the eternal abode of the supreme being, whom evil can not approach. He has created millions of worlds, of which no one can resemble the other. This immense variety is an attribute of his immense power. There are no two leaves of a tree on the earth, nor two globes in the infinite space of the heavens, which are alike, and all that you see on the little atom where you were born, had to be, in the time and place fixed for it, according to the immutable laws of him who embraces everything. Men think that that child, who has just been drowned, fell into the water by chance, but there is no chance;

everything is 'trial, or punishment, or reward, or foresight.' Remember the fisherman whom you thought the most unfortunate of all men. Orosmade sent you to change his destiny. Feeble mortal! cease to dispute against what you must adore."

"But . . . ," said Zadig; but as he said "but," the angel Jesrad took his flight towards the tenth sphere. Zadig, on his knees, adored Providence, and submitted. The angel cried to him from the heights of the air to take his way back to Babylon.

Zadig returned to Babylon, still in cowl and gown, or, as he calls it, in *bonnet de nuit et robe de chambre,* and met with a most loving reception; the people feasted their eyes on him. He easily divined the enigmas of time and life, and then, still in gown and cowl, easily overcame Itobad, thus making himself King of Babylon and husband of Astarté. Under the reign of Zadig and Astarté the empire enjoyed peace, glory, and abundance, because it was governed by Justice and Love. People blessed Zadig, Zadig blessed heaven, and adored Providence.

The question of the interpretation of this

episode has already been, in a large measure, disposed of, but the arguments that have been presented may be summed up here, and, wherever necessary, elaborated. The chief point to be kept in mind is that, in view of all that has gone before, this episode must be considered in reference to Voltaire's life. The immediate point of contact between this episode and Voltaire's life is his efforts to get into the French Academy: he wanted to become one of the *élus,* but "many are called and few chosen." He had every quality, with the sole exception of religion. He proceeded to remedy this defect. He wrote to the Archbishop of Sens, on whom he so often emptied the vials of his ridicule, to give public testimony to his submission to the dogmas of the Christian religion (M. 36, p. 191 ff.), but he was not explicit enough. He wrote to Mirepoix in the same vein. Frederick expressed his astonishment at this turn of affairs (M. 36, p. 208):

> "Depuis quand, dites-moi, Voltaire,
> Etes-vous dégénéré?
> Chez un philosophe épuré,
> Quoi! la grâce efficace opère!
> Par Mirepoix endoctriné,

Et tout aspergé d'eau bénite,
Abattu d'un jeûne obstiné,
Allez-vous devenir ermite?
D'un ton saintement nasillard,
Et marmottant quelque prière,
En bâillant lisant le bréviaire,
On vous enrôle à Saint-Médard,
Avec indulgence plénière."

Voltaire writes to Cideville from The Hague, indicating how he intended to become one of the *élus* (M. 36, p. 215):

"Je veux, en partant de Berlin,
Demander justice au saint-père;
J'irai baiser son pied divin
Et chez vous je viendrai soudain
Avec indulgence plénière.
Je veux avoir enfin Rome pour mon amie,
Et, malgré quelques vers hardis,
Je veux être un élu dans le saint paradis,
Si je suis réprouvé dans votre Académie."

Frederick calls this hypocrisy of Voltaire the "bending of the knee of the minister of truth to the idol of superstition" (M. 36, p. 208).

That Voltaire realized the import of what he was doing and submitted to it only as one submits to the inevitable is obvious from his letters to the Comte d'Argenson and to Thieriot. To

the former he writes (M. 36, p. 221): *Il* (*i. e.*, Mirepoix) *prend assurément un bien mauvais parti, et il fait plus de mal qu'il ne pense. Il devrait savoir que c'est un métier bien triste de faire des hypocrites.* To the latter he expresses himself similarly (M. 36, p. 297): *Il faudrait que la vertu ne fût point obligé de rendre hommage au fanatisme et à l'hypocrisie.*

Before continuing with the episode of Jesrad, it will be necessary to explain the episode of the *Combats,* in which the opposition to Voltaire's candidacy to the French Academy is symbolized in the character of Itobad. It is only because Itobad stole the honor due to their merit that Voltaire and Zadig are obliged to have recourse to the divine.

The Episode of Itobad

In his *Mémoire* against the libels to which he had been subjected in 1739, and which were renewed by the poet Roi in 1744, Voltaire seems to point to Desfontaines and Jean Jacques Lefranc de Pompignan, with the possible inclusion of the old poet Crébillon. He protests that he is not a satirist (M. 32, p. 460 f.), and that he never refused praise and honor where they were

due. Lefranc need only publish his tragedy, on the same theme as Voltaire's *Alzire,* to see how ready Voltaire will be to show appreciation of his talents. Crébillon need only produce his *Catilina* to meet with the same generous treatment. At the end of the *Mémoire* he seizes the pen from the hand of the copyist to inform the world in his own hand what he intends to do in the face of persecution: he will take a lesson from the characters that he has created in *Alzire;* he will arm himself with that probity which he has depicted in all his works, *comme ces anciens qui se couvraient des armes fabriquées par leurs mains.* That is, since he is speaking of the tragedy which he had dedicated to Mme. du Châtelet, his muse, he will arm himself with the white armor given to him by Astarté, Queen of Babylon. In *Zadig* that armor was stolen from him by Itobad; but who, in Voltaire's life is represented by Itobad? Certainly the man or men who forced him to play the rôle of the hypocrite, and the man or men who besmirched his honor. They were Maurepas and Mirepoix, the Archbishop of Sens and the Archbishop of Strasburg; they were Lefranc de Pompignan

who stole the subject of *Alzire,* and of whose persecutions Voltaire complains frequently in this period; Crébillon, who opposed his tragedy *Mahomet,* and especially Desfontaines who denounced this tragedy, who accused Voltaire of atheism, who furnished to Voltaire's enemies in 1744 the satires which the poet Roi made use of to defeat Voltaire's candidacy to the French Academy, and of whom Voltaire wrote (M. 8, p. 423):

> "Mais l'ingrat dévoré d'envie,
> Trompette de la calomnie,
> Qui cherche à flétrir mon honneur,
> Voilà le ravisseur coupable,
> Voilà le larcin détestable."

In other words: *Voilà le larcin d'Itobad, le ravisseur des armes blanches de Zadig.*

Now there are two circumstances that offer unmistakable proof of the application of Itobad to such men as those already mentioned: his fatuity, his repetition of the phrase *un homme comme moi,* and his title of *monseigneur.* These two circumstances show that Itobad is a composite character, made up of the fatuous man of letters and the dignitary of the church. The following references will establish that.

The very first instance of the expression *un homme comme moi* to be found in Voltaire's correspondence is the use made of it by Desfontaines in his first letter to Voltaire (M. 33, p. 110). This wretched scribbler writes as follows to his benefactor: "Je suis trop connu dans le monde pour qu'il convienne à un homme comme moi de me taire après un si exécrable affront." Later, after the beginning of hostilities between him and Voltaire, he wrote to the poet in the most fatuous vein (M. 33, p. 569): "Qui vous jugera, si vous vous récusez? Je veux bien que vous sachiez qu'en toutes sortes de matières, et même sur vos ouvrages de poésie, je suis en état de vous donner des conseils, ayant l'étude et le jugement nécessaires, et un goût qui passe pour assez sûr." He refers to Voltaire's apology for the *tutoiement* of the *Mort de César,* which, he says, has given rise to a thousand jests. He asks him if he remembers that the *tutoiement* was the source of his affair of 1725, and adds: *Le vers de Lamotte: taisez-vous, me dis-tu, me paraît admirable aujourd'hui.* He tells Voltaire that he does not wish to have any quarrel with him, but if there is one he will get the better of him both by the

justice of his reasons and by the authority which he has acquired in the Republic of Letters, and will make him pass *pour le Claudien du siècle: car, en matière de théâtre, il ne serait pas seulement question de vous.*

It is a matter of the greatest astonishment to us that this obscure wretch, whose very name would have been forgotten but for Voltaire, should have used such language. His fatuous use of *un homme comme moi,* and his reference to the *tutoiement* which caused Voltaire's "affaire of 1725" and the verse of Lamotte: *taisez-vous, me dis-tu,* indicate the meaning of the name Itobad. Voltaire uses an anagramme, Iro, to represent the name of the poet Roi, whose fatuity we will discuss in a moment. Herbelot gives the significance of *bad* as "wind," and we have seen that Herbelot is largely Voltaire's authority. Is is not likely that Itobad means the blatant fellow who is always saying of himself, *moi, moi, un homme comme moi,* and of other people and to them: *toi, toi, un homme comme toi;* a fellow who criticizes Voltaire's tragedy for the *tutoiement,* and who points to some misfortunes which the use of *tu, toi,* brought upon Voltaire in 1725? And what was

this misfortune? We know of no affair except that of Rohan-Chabot. Is it possible that Voltaire's misfortune was caused by some use of the second personal pronoun to the worthless cadet of a great house? Or did Rohan-Chabot resent Voltaire's *tutoiement* of Mlle. Lecouvreur? At all events this interpretation of the name and its application to Desfontaines is strengthened by Desfontaines' fatuous references to himself in the *Voltairomanie.* He calls himself *un homme de qualité,* says Voltaire (M. 23, p. 25), *parce qu'il a un frère auditeur des comptes à Rouen; homme de bonnes mœurs,* because he was only a few days at Bicêtre; he compares himself to Despréaux, because he composed a work in verse; he boasts that he always goes with a laquais, but neglects to say whether the laquais is before or behind.

The fatuity of Desfontaines was not the exception but the rule among Voltaire's enemies. At the time that he was bending every effort to get into the French Academy the Abbé de Bernis, who had just been elected, and whose meteoric career of favor with the Pompadour was rising to its apogee, was preparing to praise, in his *Discours de réception,* that other symbol

of *Envie,* the poet Roi (M. 36, p. 330). Voltaire can scarce restrain his indignation. He writes to d'Argental to see Bernis and get him to omit his praise. "Roi de grands talents! quatre ou cinq scènes de ballet; des vers médiocres, dans un genre très-médiocre: voilà de plaisants talents! Y a-t-il de quoi racheter les horreurs de sa vie?" Roi himself writes to the *lieutenant général de police* (M. 36, p. 437) as follows: "Au retour de la campagne, où j'étais allé ensevelir mon chagrin sur la mort de ma soeur, j'ai appris que ma réputation était vivement attaquée par le sieur de Voltaire. . . . L'homme qui veut être à toute force mon ennemi me choisit entre tous les siens pour m'imputer tout ce qui s'écrit contre lui: il craint que je ne fusse son concurrent à l'Académie, moi dont l'indifférence ou la retenue sur ce vain titre est connu de toute la France. . . . Il prétexte sa calomnie de l'envie que me doit causer son talent, et du chagrin qu'il me fait en donnant ses ouvrages lyriques à la cour et à la ville. En vérité, monsieur, ai-je perdu à la comparaison, et dois-je être mortifié?" And he is the fellow who claimed that Voltaire "lui avait rendu la lyre!"

But perhaps the greatest fatuity was observed in Lefranc de Pompignan, whose very name has something of the pretentious, the pompous, about it. At the time when he stole Voltaire's subject of *Alzire* and prepared to have his tragedy presented before Voltaire's at the *Théâtre-Français,* the comedians desired to hear his tragedy read a second time to them before proceeding with the distribution of the rôles. This little provincial, who had produced nothing but his tragedy of *Didon,* who was a plagiary, Voltaire says, and known largely for his friendship for Rousseau and Desfontaines, wrote as follows to the directors of the *Théâtre-Français* (M. 10, p. 105): "Je suis fort surpris, messieurs, que vous exigez une seconde lecture d'une tragédie telle que *Zoraïde.* Si vous ne vous connaissez pas en mérite, je me connais en procédés, et je me souviendrai assez longtemps des vôtres pour ne plus m'occuper d'un théâtre où l'on distingue si peu les personnes et les talents."

Voltaire had already described this type of man in his *English Letters* (M. 22, p. 111): "Whoever comes from the provinces with money and a name in -ac or -ille, can say: *Un*

homme comme moi, un homme de qualité. Such a man despises a merchant; he would never think of working for a living. He is like the numerous descendants of the noble houses of Germany who have nothing but their name and sovereign pride."

One of the contradictions that Voltaire notes in France (M. 22, p. 25) is that a bishop, who preaches humility and is vowed to poverty, refuses his door to anyone who does not call him *Monseigneur,* whereas a marshal of France, who commands 100,000 men, is content with *Monsieur.* So Itobad has himself called *Monseigneur* by his servants. Voltaire follows his usual practice, in raising individual enemies in the Republic of Letters into the domain of religion: Itobad becomes the representative of the blatancy of the clergy. This seems all the more probable from a similar episode, that of Irax, which was first published by the Kehl editors, and which we will consider here.

The Episode of Irax

Complaints came every day to the court against the *Itimadoulet de Médie,* named Irax. "C'était un grand seigneur dont le fonds n'était

pas mauvais, mais qui était corrompu par la vanité et par la volupté. Il souffrait rarement qu'on lui parlât, et jamais qu'on l'osât contredire. Les paons ne sont pas plus vains, les colombes ne sont pas plus voluptueuses, les tortues ont moins de paresse; il ne respirait que la fausse gloire et les faux plaisirs." Zadig undertook to correct him. He sent him a music master, with twelve voices and twenty-four violinists, a chef, with six cooks and four chamberlains, who were never to quit Irax for a moment. The musicians were to sing a cantata, lasting two hours, the refrain of which, recurring at intervals of three minutes, was as follows:

"Que son mérite est extrême!
Que de grâces! que de grandeur!
Ah! combien monseigneur
Doit être content de lui-même!"

After the execution of the cantata a chamberlain made a harangue of three quarters of an hour in which Irax was praised expressly for the qualities which he lacked. Then he was conducted to dinner at the sound of instruments. The dinner lasted three hours, and as soon as Irax opened his mouth to speak, the first cham-

berlain said: *Il aura raison.* Hardly had he uttered four words when the second chamberlain cried: *Il a raison.* The other two chamberlains laughed loudly at the *bons mots* which Irax said or which he ought to have said. After dinner the cantata was repeated. At first Irax thought that the King was honoring him according to his merit, but he soon got tired of the régime, and promised to be less vain and to apply himself to some useful labor. *Il se fit moins encenser, eut moins de fêtes, et fut plus heureux; car, comme dit le Sadder, toujours du plaisir n'est pas du plaisir.*

The realistic basis of this episode is obvious when it is applied to Jean Jacques Lefranc de Pompignan. Marmontel visited Voltaire at Ferney when the Patriarch was "hunting Pompignan every morning, in accordance with his doctor's orders, for his health." Indeed, Marmontel says, Voltaire seemed to have grown ten years younger from this exercise. Of Lefranc Marmontel says (*Mémoires,* Vol. I, p. 413): "L'excès de sa vanité, de sa présomtion, de son ambition l'avait enivré. Malheureusement trop flatté dans ses académies de Montauban et de Toulouse, accoutumé à s'y entendre applaudir

dès qu'il ouvrait la bouche, et même avant qu'il eût parlé vanté dans les journaux dont il savait gagner ou payer la faveur, il se croyait un homme d'importance en littérature; et par malheur encore il avait ajouté à l'arrogance d'un seigneur de paroisse l'orgueil d'un président de cour supérieure dans sa ville de Montauban; ce qui formait un personnage ridicule dans tous les points. D'après l'opinion qu'il avait de lui-même, il avait trouvé malhonnête qu'à la première envie qu'il avait témoignée d'être de l'Académie française, on ne se fût pas empressé à l'y recevoir; et, lorsqu'en 1758, Sainte-Palaye y avait eu sur lui la préférence, il en avait marqué un superbe dépit. Deux ans après, l'Académie n'avait pas laissé de lui accorder ses souffrages; et il n'y avait pour lui que de l'agrément dans l'unanimité de son élection; mais, au lieu de la modestie que les plus grands hommes eux-mêmes affectaient, au moins en y entrant, il y apporta l'humeur de l'orgueil offensé, avec un excès d'âpreté et de hauteur inconcevable."

Voltaire undertook to correct *ce grave magistrat, qui vint de Montauban pour gouverner l'État* (M. 10, p. 415), who thought the whole

universe occupied with his literary productions. He did this in the series of satires known as the *Monosyllables,* the verses on *Vanity,* the *Hymne chanté au village de Pompignan,* etc. Of these satires we may quote from the *Qui* and from the *Hymne.* The first is typical of the *Monosyllables* (M. 10, p. 562):

"Qui pilla jadis Métastase,
Et Qui crut imiter Maron?
Qui, bouffi d'ostentation,
Sur ses écrits est en extase?
Qui si longuement paraphrase
David en dépit d'Apollon,
Prétendant passer pour un vase
Qu'on appelle d'élection?
Qui, parlant à sa nation,
Et l'insultant avec emphase,
Pense être au haut de l'Hélicon
Lorsqu'il barbote dans la vase?
Qui dans plus d'une périphrase
A ses maîtres fait la lecon?
Entre nous, je crois que son nom
Commence en V, et finit en aze."

The *Hymne chanté au village de Pompignan* (M. 10, p. 569) probably furnished the idea for the cantata of the episode of Irax. The following verses show its nature:

"Je suis marquis, robin, poète,
Mes chers amis;
Vous voyez que je suis prophète
En mon pays.
A Paris c'est tout autrement.
Et vive le roi, et Simon Le Franc,
Son favori, son favori!
"J'ai fait un psautier judaïque,
On n'en sait rien;
J'ai fait un beau panégyrique,
Et c'est le mien:
De moi je suis content.
Et vive le roi, et Simon Le Franc,
Son favori, son favori."

The part of the episode dealing with the harangue and the dinner was probably suggested by the satire of Voltaire (M. 24, p. 461), entitled *Relation du Voyage de M. le Marquis Lefranc de Pompignan depuis Pompignan jusqu'à Fontainebleau.* Pompignan is represented as speaking. He describes a sermon and procession of which he was the hero; also a repast of twenty-six covers *dont il sera parlé à jamais.* In this sermon (M. 24, p. 459) it is said that *Dieu a donné à ce marquis la jeunesse et les ailes de l'aigle, qu'il est assis près des astres, que l'impie rampe à ses pieds dans la boue, qu'il est admiré de l'univers, et que son*

génie brille d'un éclat immortel. That is the justice that the Marquis renders to himself.

Pompignan tried to defend himself from Voltaire's attacks, but he only made himself more ridiculous. "Il addressa un mémoire au roi; son mémoire fut bafoué. Voltaire parut rajeunir pour s'égayer à ses dépens; en vers, en prose, sa malice fut plus légère, plus piquante, plus féconde en idées originales et plaisantes qu'elle n'avait jamais été. Une saillie n'attendait pas l'autre. Le public ne cessa de rire aux dépens du triste Le Franc. Obligé de se tenir enfermé chez lui, pour ne pas entendre chanter sa chanson dans le monde, et, pour ne pas se voir montrer au doigt, il finit par aller s'ensevelir dans son château, où il est mort, sans avoir jamais osé reparaître à l'Académie" (Marmontel, *Mémoires,* Vol. 1, p. 413). In other words, the cure of Irax, *itimadoulet de Médie,* was effected. Voltaire says of Lefranc (M. 10, p. 104, *Le pauvre Diable*), what he says of Irax, *dont le fonds n'était pas mauvais:* he gives him credit for being a man of merit, with the exception of the vanity and vainglory of his *Discours de réception.* This note is of

1771, and is thus an indication of the time of the composition of the episode of Irax.

The only other character of whom Voltaire uses language comparable to that of the episode and of the satire on Pompignan, is the pope (M. 21, p. 416), who is always right, no matter what he says or does. It is likely that he meant the episode of Irax to be typical of the pope, thus giving it a larger significance. The name is explainable on this basis as an anagramme of *Archi*(mage). This association was the more easily made by the poet since Lefranc and his brother were compared to Moses and Aaron, destined to lead the chosen people of God, and since Voltaire calls him "Simon" Lefranc, *i. e.,* Simon Barjone, *i. e.,* Peter, as the vicar of Christ.

I have already referred to the same type as Itobad in Saint Austin in the *Pucelle,* who sings of the God of vengeance, of the exterminating angel, of twenty thousand Jews cut to pieces for a *veau,* of Joaz killed by Josabad, son of Atrobad, *et Athalie, si méchamment mise à mort par Joad.* He receives the treatment that was accorded to Itobad:

"Austin rougit, il fuit en tapinois:
Chacun en rit, le paradis le hue.
Tel fut hué dans les murs de Paris
Un pédant sec, à face de Thersite,
Vil délateur, insolent hypocrite,
Qui fut payé de haine et de mépris
Quand il osa, dans ses phrases vulgaires,
Flétrir les arts et condamner nos frères."

Lefranc had imitated Rousseau and Desfontaines in composing paraphrases of the psalms, and Voltaire's description of the modern David (M. 24, p. 125) is similar to his description of Saint Augustin:

"Le cruel Amalec tombe
Sous le fer de Josué;
L'orgueilleux Jabin succombe
Sous le fer d'Albinoé.
Issacar a pris les armes:
Zabulon court aux alarmes," etc.

The verdict of the spectators is *mentis non compos*. He is to be put on a strict régime in his native province until he recovers his balance.

I think that the chief reason why the episode of Irax was introduced into Voltaire's novel is that the character is of the same general type as that of Itobad, and Lefrance had been, in part, designated by Itobad. Voltaire repeats

against Lefranc the same jests that he made against Desfontaines, (1) that he was a plagiarist, a robber in the Republic of Letters, (2) that he went *derrière un jésuite,* and (3) that his nobility was assumed. In the *Car* (M. 24, p. 261), he says: *Ne faites point le grand seigneur, car vous êtes d'une bonne bourgeoisie.* The fact that Lefranc's theft of the subject of *Alzire* occurred at a time when Desfontaines and Rousseau were trying to overwhelm the poet would readily lead him to subsume them under the same symbol. They all proclaim their supremacy, their preeminence, but they are unable to prove it by their deeds. The burden of many a line of Voltaire is: Enter the arena, show your prowess, avenge yourself on your rival by surpassing him, not by robbing him, traducing him, or besmirching his honor.

In the combats for the supremacy in Babylon there are only three contestants whose names are given: Zadig, Itobad, and Omate. There are good reasons for thinking that *Omate* is an anagramme for *Mahomet.* In the chapter on Arbogad I have shown the intimate connection between the *Voltairomanie* of Desfontaines and the tragedy *Mahomet* of Voltaire: they are

equivalent symbols, the symbol of exclusive domination. By the composition of his tragedy Voltaire becomes the victor of *Mahomet* and Zadig the victor of *Omate.* But Desfontaines, both by the composition of the *Voltairomanie,* and by his efforts, in conjunction with the other enemies of Voltaire, to suppress the tragedy in Paris, can claim the victory over Voltaire's *Mahomet,* just as Itobad claims the victory over *Omate.* This is effected, however, only by rapine, by treachery, by traducing virtue into vice, by robbing the real victor of the fruit of his victory. That is the ultimate significance of the episode. Voltaire's only recourse, then, was to withdraw from the combat entirely, or to enroll himself under the banner of the cross. He chose the latter course: he donned cowl and gown, he bowed his head and adored.

But what did he adore?

There is always a sense in which everything that Voltaire says is true. Undoubtedly everything in this world is, from the point of view of man, "reward, or punishment, or trial, or foresight." If we did not learn from experience the race would never advance, any more than the individual. One does not have to be

devout to bow to Providence, or Destiny, or whatever one may call the spirit that rules the universe. It is the knowledge of what destiny is: that is, the inevitable linking of cause and effect in a given environment, that makes man prudent. It was that knowledge that induced Henry IV to say: *Paris vaut bien une messe.* And it was that knowledge which induced Voltaire to think that a place among the Immortals was worth his submission to the angel Jesrad.

I think that this name is influenced by several sources, namely, (1) by the name Jesus, (2) by the name Jezad among the Persians, (3) by the Hebrew Yezer (cf. Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. 12, pp. 601–602, in the Talmud), and (4) by the Jezidae, worshippers of the devil.

Voltaire wished, I think, to characterize especially the spirit of Christ and of the Christians, the new stoics, as he calls them. The passions of man are given to him as a necessary mainspring of his being; without them he would not act. But when man, whether in the form of Christ, Moses, or Mohammed, or the followers of any religious prophet, speaks in the name of the Deity, and justifies the exercise of his pas-

sions by the divinity of his mission: when he cries, in short, of the Diety:

" Ce n'est pas moi, c'est lui qui manque à ma parole,
Qui frappe par mes mains, pille, brûle, viole,"

then he makes his passions divine; he makes the devil his God. Voltaire does not hesitate to draw this conclusion (M. 9, p. 388):

" Les tristes partisans de ce dogme effroyable
Diraient-ils rien de plus s'ils adoraient le diable? "[1]

Of course there is a sense in which God draws the bow, the arrow of which pierces an innocent and virtuous heart. That action is not done contrary to God's will, for that would involve a contradiction in terms; therefore it was God's will. Of course Providence is responsible for all that is; it was Providence that robbed the rich and hospitable man and gave to the rich miser; it was Providence that burnt down the philosopher's house; it was Providence that wrung the neck of the nephew of the poor widow.

[1] Voltaire seems to wish to indicate the equivalence of Jesus and the devil when he says (*Annales de l'Empire*, Beuchot, 23, p. 121—repeated in *Essay sur les Mœurs*, Beuchot, 16, p. 3) that to invoke the devil and not believe in Jesus is a contradiction.

But the man, whether Moses, or Mohammed, or Christ, who claimed to have a special mission, a special revelation, and, in short, whoever used the Deity as a justification of his own actions, was simply abusing this eternal verity. He was either a madman or an impostor. Zadig judges the actions of Jesrad by his reason and condemns them, just as we would judge them and condemn them in any one of our fellow beings. It is only after the metamorphosis of the monk into the angel of light; it is only when we are made to hear the voice of the Deity, the voice of revelation, that murder, pillage, rapine, become justified. Then, in order to reconcile our ideas of right and justice with whatever conflicts with them, we assign motives to the Deity. God had a particular purpose in the death of Henry IV, for example, or in the murder of the poor widow's nephew. We must acknowledge that purpose, since our religion tells us that God is omniscient, omnipotent and ubiquitous, and not a hair can fall from our heads without his will.

Voltaire's first purpose, in the creation of this episode, was, I think, to turn the weapons of his enemies against them. He had accom-

plished his purpose: he was King of Babylon and husband of Astarté. He could now say to his enemies: That is the result of Providence.

His second purpose seems to me to be to mark the equivalence of the principles of good and evil. Either one is a Manichaean, *i. e.*, a believer in two eternally warring principles, or a Christian, *i. e.*, a believer in an omniscient, omnipotent, and all-good God, who has, however, given the world over to the devil (cf. M. 18, p. 165), or one believes in one God, the author of all that is. In the first case we really have two gods instead of one; in the second case the real ruler of the world is the devil; in the third case God is the devil and vice versa. Now Voltaire's philosophy was very simple.[1] Considering, as he did, that there is no evil in the world except "par rapport à nous," it was absurd to speak of the justice or injustice of God; we might just as well speak of him as blue, or round, or square. Man has no reason to think that God owed him any more happiness than falls to his lot; God has made no pact with him. Rather than be surprised that God has made us so limited in power and capacity, we

[1] Cf. *Traité de Métaphysique.*

should be grateful that our limitations are not less than they are.

Voltaire's third purpose was, I think, to lash the Providence of the Christians. I deduce this conclusion from the name of the angel Jesrad, and from his doctrine. The name is comparable, I think, to any such formation as Henriade, Crépinade, Roussade: it is the satire of Jesus. His doctrine is that of the Christians: the assigning of motives to God to account for evil to man. The philosopher loses a beloved child in the bloom of youth; he bears his loss as best he may, but he would never for a moment consider that God had a special purpose in taking his child from him. He would not try to console himself by saying that his son might have become a wicked man had he lived. The Christian, on the other hand, whether he formulates his reasons or not, considers that God has a special design in everything, whether it be the death of his child or the burning of his house. His child has been taken from him, because he loved it more than God, etc. His house has been burned down, because he cared too much for temporal possessions. This marked for Voltaire the type of the man-god: a

god with the passions of man infinitely magnified, jealous like us, envious of our happiness, insulted if we did not take off our hats to him, etc.

The name of the angel was influenced, in all probability, by the name of the indwelling spirit of man, as characterized in the Talmud. This spirit, Yezer (cf. *Jewish Encyclopedia*), is both good and evil. In the second place, Voltaire found in Hyde's *Religion of the ancient Persians* the name Jezad, both alone and in composition, both as the name of an angel and as the name of God. He found there also a description of the cult of the Jezidae, or Jezidi, who worshipped the devil, whom they called *Pavo-Angelus,* Peacock Angel. These sectarians are neither Christians nor Mohammedans, but they are closer to the former than to the latter, says Hyde. Their Jezid, from whom they derive their name, is considered by some to be the same as Jesus Christ.

As I have already said, there is a sense in which everything is reward, or punishment, or trial, or foresight; everything has some reaction upon man, which may be ranged under one or the other of these headings. Especially the

word "trial" (*épreuve*) lets the Christian out of many difficulties. Voltaire says (M. 18, p. 266) "if there are difficulties that cannot be explained away and things that revolt our reason, they are merely to try our faith." But we can not understand this episode of the angel Jesrad unless we look upon it as a principle, philosophy, or religion in action in the person of some mortal man, who justifies his crimes as in the verses already quoted from the Discours en vers sur l'homme:

"Ce n'est pas moi, c'est lui qui manque à ma parole,
Qui frappe par mes mains, pille, brûle, viole."

The partisans of this frightful dogma could not say more if they worshipped the devil.[1]

[1] The only episodes of *Zadig* that I have not treated are those dealing with the King of Serendib, and these will form part of a future companion volume dealing specially with *Candide*.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

As I have already indicated in the Introduction, the warp and woof of my study is a first-hand investigation of Voltaire's works, all of which I have read in the sole view of interpreting his novels. I have used the Moland edition (Paris, 1877–85, 50 volumes, with two extra containing an index), except where it was not available, namely for the Annales de l'Empire and the Essai sur les Mœurs, where I used Beuchot (Paris, 1829–40, 70 volumes, with two extra containing the index). For the bibliography of Voltaire's works I have consulted Bengesco where there has been any necessity of determining the date of a particular work.

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